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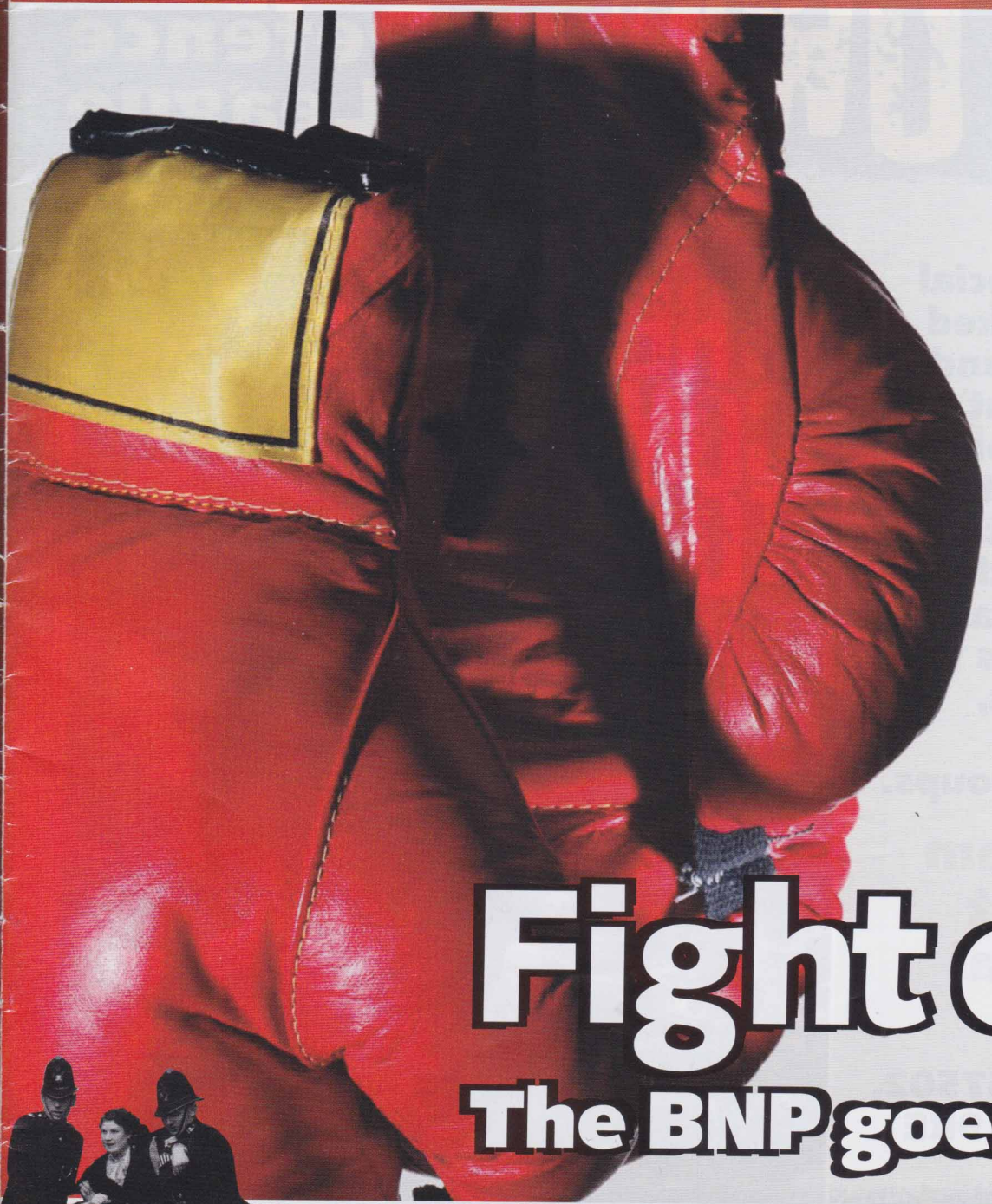
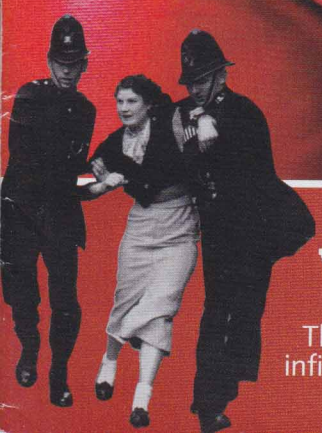


Fight club

The BNP goes to war



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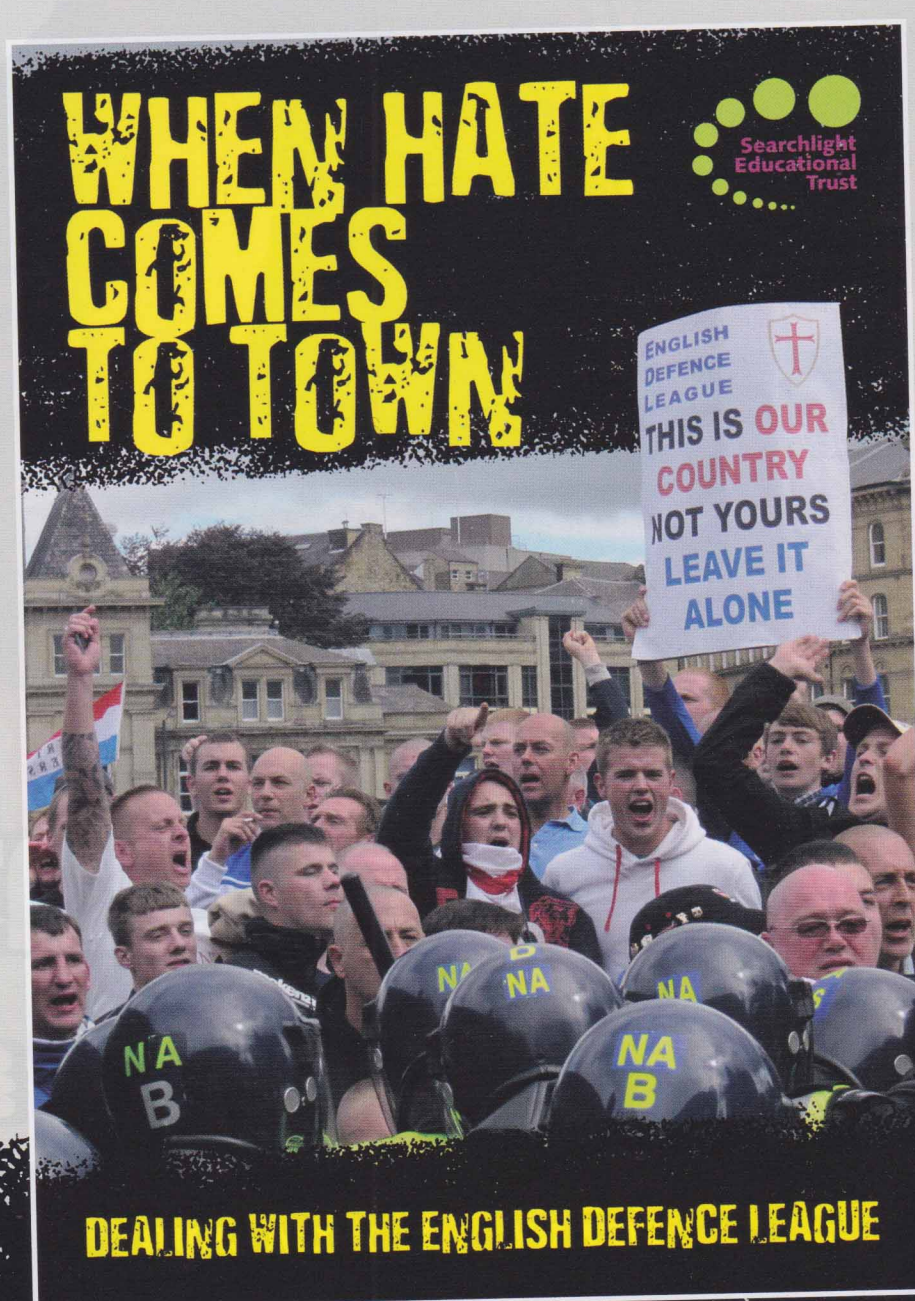
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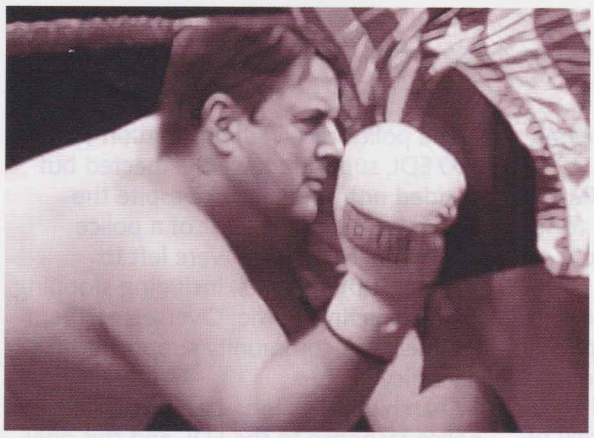

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Editorial

A SECOND NASTY PARTY

AS SEARCHLIGHT goes to press it seems possible that Andrew Brons and a sizeable number of British National Party members will shortly split away and form a new party – the British Democratic Party. Nick Griffin's factional antics, financial mismanagement and political stupidity has finally led to a major split. The BNP will limp on without most of its activists, but the main focus will switch to Brons's new venture, be it immediately or when he loses the leadership battle.

Let us be under no illusions, Brons's new party will differ little politically from the BNP. It will still oppose immigration, be embedded to racial superiority, be Islamophobic and include in its leading positions people who deny the Holocaust and believe in a Jewish conspiracy. If anything, the new party will be more hardline than the BNP. In building a broad nationalist alliance, the British Democratic Party is likely to attract many of those who view Griffin as too moderate.

The next few months will be a period of turmoil for the far right. Whether Brons splits immediately or in a couple of months, the BNP and British Democratic Party will slug it out in what is set to be an increasingly bitter feud as they compete for activists, money and possibly votes. While anti-fascists will enjoy the spectacle of fascists tearing each other apart, we must remain vigilant and be ready to fight whichever of the two parties poses a serious threat.

Despite our recent success over the BNP, the need for the HOPE not hate campaign is as strong as ever.

SLACK POLICING

The appalling racist attack on two Asian men by English Defence League thugs owes as much to poor policing as it does to the anti-Muslim violence of those involved in the attacks. The police consciously decided to ignore an EDL march despite a death on a previous event and the violent attack on a Unite against Fascism meeting in Barking only a few weeks earlier.

The police received information that 300 EDL supporters were expected but decided not to act on it. Despite the march beginning in sight of a police station the EDL thugs were left to steward it themselves, including stopping and redirecting traffic. Overseeing them was just one community support officer on a bicycle.

Searchlight has long been critical of the police response to the EDL and this only confirms our concern. One young man now has a metal plate in his jaw and a large cut to the back of his head. The other was fortunate to get away with only cuts and bruises. As the police begin to prepare for an EDL demonstration in Tower Hamlets let's hope there is a serious review of policing the EDL.

BAN THE MARCH

Over the next few weeks the Metropolitan Police, the Mayor's Office and Tower Hamlets council will consider a request from the English Defence League for a march in East London in early September. Hopefully they will come to the only sensible decision which is to ban the march.

The EDL has become ever more confrontational and violent in recent months, with its supporters involved in attacking leftwing meetings, independent bookshops and buildings. It is clear that the purpose of its planned march in Tower Hamlets is to wind up and provoke local people. Some will argue that this is freedom of speech but as we say on page 32, with rights come responsibilities. In a democratic society it is clearly not right for a small group of extremists to incite hatred in another community.

The march must be banned.

Nick Lowles

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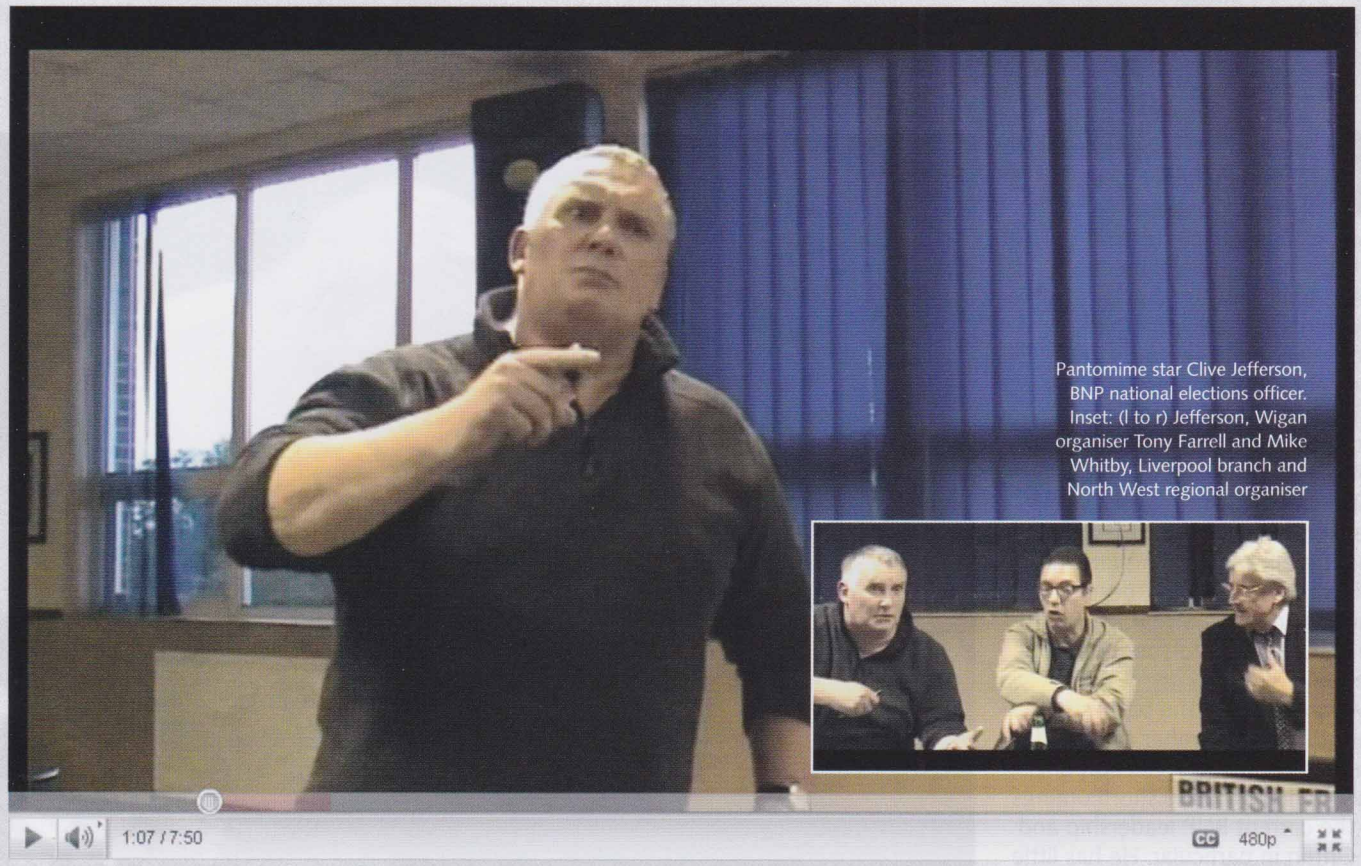
Opening shot
Banging the gavel

by **David Williams**



Pantomime star Clive Jefferson, BNP national elections officer. Inset: (l to r) Jefferson, Wigan organiser Tony Farrell and Mike Whitby, Liverpool branch and North West regional organiser

THE BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY doesn't put on many pantomimes these days. The last decent one was over ten years ago in Tipton in the West Midlands when BNP leader Nick Griffin hid behind the stage door to listen in as Mike Newland, the party treasurer, accused him of being a crook and an asset-stripper.

Wigan BNP revived the tradition last month. It was meant to be a serious branch meeting, but when Griffin's swivel-eyed sycophant Clive Jefferson took to the stage with the hapless Liverpool BNP organiser Mike Whitby, the show was on.

Jefferson began by denying the party was in freefall. The crowd loved it, the guffawing was almost palpable. But they couldn't say anything. If they tried, Whitby, playing a Widow Cranky character, would retort: "You're not a member so you shouldn't even be putting questions".

Embarrassingly, the questioner was in full possession of the facts, unlike the enraged Whitby who descended into splenetic personal abuse. "Shut up" he shouted suddenly, demanding to be allowed to answer the question. Given the floor he again abused the questioner.

The gavel was banged: Whitby was ruled out of order by the Wigan organiser.

Jefferson did not approve. He shuffled from side to side in his seat as Whitby shouted to be heard. "Answer the question" demanded the Wigan organiser.

"I'm a member, he's not, so he shouldn't be asking the question", ranted Whitby.

Then, in a to-and-fro reminiscent of the old "Oh yes he is" line, Whitby decided he did have something to say after all. But what with all the booing he had to ask "please" before they would.

"As far as you're concerned I don't ever want to talk to you again frankly," he told the naughty boys and girls. Then he decided he would only answer the question if the chair asked it.

At that point Jefferson lifted himself out of his seat and left, leaving Whitby to be shouted at by angry party members.

Thankfully Wigan BNP was kind enough to put footage of the farce on the internet for all to enjoy. The branch blog even described the meeting as "historic" and offered to run off copies for interested members.

Let's hope some of their colleagues in other branches prove as generous in sharing similar episodes of hilarity.

IT'S WAR

Nick Lowles reports on a forthcoming leadership election and potential split in the BNP

Nick Griffin is on course to remain leader of the British National Party for another five years after an extraordinary general meeting voted to accept the changes to the constitution that Griffin had proposed. Amid an angry and confrontational atmosphere, Griffin won the day only after producing several hundred proxy votes in his favour.

The BNP will have a leadership election within the next few weeks and it is almost certain that Griffin will emerge victorious, despite announcing only a year ago that he was planning to stand down as leader in 2013.

Andrew Brons, the party's Yorkshire and Humber MEP, is likely to contest the election but only to highlight the shortcomings of the current BNP leadership and of Griffin in particular. He has little chance of defeating Griffin, given the way that the election is to be held, but his focus now is on softening up the membership enough to take people with him into a new party.

BRUSSELS CONFRONTATION

The divisions in the party have widened since Brons announced his decision to challenge Griffin. This caught the party leadership by surprise as they had been expecting Griffin's opponent to be the veteran nationalist and Holocaust denier Richard Edmonds, who from their point of view was not a serious challenger. Brons is different. As an MEP he is certainly a more credible alternative and is more likely to be known to armchair members, which, given that canvassing and election campaigning are banned, is essential.

Caption: (l-r) Former leading BNP officers Kevin Scott, Nick Cass, Ken Booth and Eddy Butler call for Nick Griffin's resignation

The two men came face to face in Brussels during a visit to the European Parliament by a large group of Griffin opponents. Griffin interrupted a meeting Brons was holding with this group, who included Edmonds and the prominent former BNP activists Michael Barnbrook, Chris Beverley and Eddy Butler. Griffin took questions from the floor, but the meeting did not stay civil for long as he came under a barrage of insults and abuse.

At first Brons remained quiet but he too was soon dragged into the arguments and began attacking his fellow MEP, who of course lost no time in responding in kind.

The meeting broke up with a heated exchange between Griffin and Butler, the party's former national organiser who was expelled from the party after daring to challenge Griffin for the leadership last year. Griffin accused Butler of spreading numerous lies about him on the internet only to admit that he had not actually looked at the offending blog when asked to point out the inaccuracies.

Griffin did tell the audience that an EGM would be called to vote on changes to the party's constitution, as agreed at last year's party conference. However, when the EGM notice arrived it became clear that Griffin had no intention of following the democratic decision of the party members. In place of the suggestions drawn up by Brons and Arthur Kemp in accordance with their instructions, Griffin placed three new constitutional amendments before the meeting held on 26 June.

The current Advisory Council was to be replaced by a new National Executive but rather than being democratically elected, like in any normal political party, the majority of places would go to people appointed by the party leader.

The other key change related to elections for the party leader. Griffin's proposal was to do away with the need for a challenger to gain the nominations of 20% of all those with at least two years' party membership even before an election takes place, an impossibly high target. No signatures will be required but the winner will now be handed a fixed five-year term in office. Griffin claimed this would do away with destabilising leadership challenges but of course all it did was consolidate power even more.

The vote will now be held in July instead of September. The election campaign will be compressed into a few weeks, with regional hustings that only party members in that region can attend.

These hustings will be limit of the leadership campaign. Under the new rules candidates are not allowed to campaign in any normal sense of the word. They cannot set up websites, canvass votes, hold election rallies or even speak at branch meetings.

Of course these rules favour the incumbent. His name is known, most party officers are loyalists as Griffin has sacked the rest, and of course he can circulate literature and write extensively on the party website in his capacity as party leader. Breaking these draconian election rules is a disciplinary offence.

The divisions within the party have widened since Brons announced his decision to challenge Griffin

STACKING THE DECK

To make certain that the EGM vote would go his way, Griffin stacked the deck in his favour. The meeting was held on a Sunday morning in St Helens, the location of one of the few loyal party branches left, and the redirection point closed at 10am, making it extremely difficult for members to get to.

But even that was not enough to make the result safe. A few days before the EGM the party leadership sent out proxy voting forms for the first time in its history. Members had little more than 48 hours to fill them in and send them back to five appointed tellers – all Griffin supporters.

The Brons camp was understandably furious and there was even a discussion about getting an injunction to stop the EGM from taking place. In the event they decided it should go ahead because they believed they could have a majority on the conference floor and Griffin would be forced to use the proxy votes to win the day. That, the Brons camp felt, would really show the leadership up for the dictators they were.

However, to protect themselves, Brons's election agent Chris Roberts wrote to Clive Jefferson, the party's national elections officer, to register their unhappiness. After pointing out several concerns, including the wording on the proxy vote letter, which was heavily slated in support of Griffin's amendments, Roberts concluded: "In light of the enormous ramifications for a person ultimately successful in any leadership challenge this year (i.e. the possibility of a four or five year term), it is of the utmost importance on behalf of the ➤

No longer mates: the BNP's MEPs Andrew Brons and Nick Griffin

membership of the British National Party that this General Members meeting is seen to be fair, transparent and in accordance with the legal responsibilities of the party management."

There was no report of any reply.

THIRD WORLD DEMOCRACY

The whole affair was becoming a farce and this much was recognised by Brons, whose website publicly lamented the "Third World-standards to which our Chairman has resorted" in trying to cling to power. He encouraged all who could to attend the EGM to root out the "culture of corruption" that has taken hold of the party.

Brons also voiced his unhappiness that Griffin had substituted his own proposal to overhaul the party's governing mechanisms for the one for which last December's BNP conference actually voted. Fuming, Brons declared: "Substituting a proposal that has not been passed for one that has been passed is the equivalent of emptying a ballot box and filling it with your own ballot papers!"

Watching on the sidelines was Butler, who at the end of May joined the English Democrats Party. Butler works for Brons, as does Beverley, another former BNP organiser, who switched to the EDP before the May elections.

Butler urged people to accept the amendments but he might have had ulterior motives. Certainly the Griffin camp lost no time in linking Butler's and Beverley's membership of the EDP while remaining in Brons's employment as a sign of treachery by Griffin's challenger.

To head off this attack, Brons went out of his way to distance himself from the EDP. For Brons, a long-term racist whose career began in the National Socialist Movement in the 1960s, the EDP is "inherently unsound ideologically". He went on: "If the English Democrats were the last party on the face of the earth, I would not join them."

Attacking the EDP, as does Griffin, for being "civic nationalist", Brons's criticism is primarily race-based. "When the ED wanted to use somebody to represent the plight of English students," he lamented, "it felt that they were most appropriately exemplified by an Asian student."

Rather than joining the EDP, Brons and his supporters have already put in place preparations for a new political party, called the British Democratic Party (BDP), in the event that they are expelled or otherwise forced out of the BNP.

Brons and his supporters have been toying with this idea for a while but the Yorkshire MEP was at pains not to appear as though he was splitting the party but rather that he had been left with no option. The party was registered with the Electoral Commission on 23 May 2011 with Adrian Davies as leader. Davies, a barrister, led the now-defunct Freedom Party in the early years of this century and notably unsuccessfully represented Chris Roberts and his brother Barry in a landmark libel case against *Searchlight*.

Certainly the Griffin camp lost no time in linking Butler's and Beverley's membership of the EDP while remaining in Brons's employment as a sign of treachery by Griffin's challenger

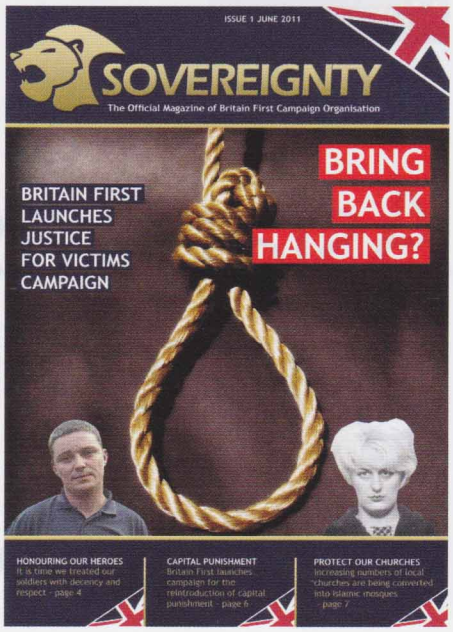
The BDP will be little more than a BNP mark two. Ideologically it will differ little and, if anything, it will attract some of the more hardline elements in the BNP and some of those who have left over the past few years.

Brons is hoping that Beverley will be persuaded to join but there appears little chance of Butler jettisoning the EDP in the near future. Despite employing him, Brons has never been particularly close to Butler and this gulf has widened considerably in recent weeks.

THE INEVITABLE SPLIT

Now that Griffin has emerged successful from the EGM he is likely to win the forthcoming leadership election. The Brons camp are regrouping and as *Searchlight* goes to press it is not entirely clear what they will do, but early indications are that he will challenge, if for no other reason than that it will further widen the differences between the two men and hopefully convince people to leave the BNP when the time comes.

A BNP leadership election seems likely to take place in the next weeks but it appears to be only a matter of time before Brons leads his supporters out of the party. ■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Increasing numbers of local churches are being converted into Islamic mosques - page 7

Britain First
A still-born alternative

By **Matthew Collins**

NEVER ONE to miss a marketing opportunity or, it would seem, capitalise on the poor fortune of the British National Party leader Nick Griffin, Jim Dowson, Griffin's former *consiglieri* who once virtually owned the BNP, has joined up with other former BNP officers to launch yet another a new organisation.

Dowson's relationship with the BNP has become increasingly acrimonious since his carefully orchestrated withdrawal from the party last Christmas, which the BNP reported as merely the result of his contract coming to an end. The further the BNP sank into the mire of mounting debt and internal strife, the more Dowson has convinced himself that he is the saviour of British nationalism.

During the May elections, Dowson gave an extraordinarily candid interview to the *Belfast Telegraph* concerning the party's debts, especially the large sums it owed to Belfast-based businesses. It all but destroyed any hope that the BNP might have had of getting a respectable vote in the province. Then former employees of Dowson and the BNP brought a joint action in a Belfast court for monies owed to them, in the process ridiculing the BNP for being too scared to attend the hearing.

Dowson believes he can rise from the ashes. Having been Griffin's financial crutch, Dowson knows where a fair few of the BNP's funders are to be found. He has been joined in the party's former Belfast office by Paul Golding, the former Sevenoaks BNP councillor and party communications officer, and Andy McBride, its former South East regional organiser

In mid May the three of them launched a campaign group called Britain First with a mass publicity drive to around 80,000 people across Europe and the USA. Anti-abortionists, religious zealots and current and former BNP members and supporters began receiving a collection of emails, glossy magazines and phone calls from the new group.

Britain First appears to be the pressure and cultural group that Griffin had first suggested forming for himself if the BNP were forced into the political wilderness. It will not contest elections but makes out it can influence policy through petitions.

Jim Dowson (left) and Paul Golding

Many of the recipients of Dowson's material appear to have come from the BNP's old lists.

As well as the predictable shock and indignation from the BNP, which instructed members to report the communications as "spam", it appears the launch caused a rift in the anti-Griffin camps inside and outside the party. Believing that Andrew Brons, the party's Yorkshire and Humber MEP, had dithered for too long over plans to launch an all-out attack on Griffin, and that Eddy Butler who has run an anti-Griffin blog since his expulsion from the BNP last year, had moved too close to the English Democrats Party, Dowson and Golding launched their group without fulfilling their promise to consult other Griffin opponents.

One insider told us that a major factor in the "early strike" by Dowson and Golding was the possibility of being forced into a coalition with Michaela Mackenzie of the tiny British Freedom Party. Dowson sacked Mackenzie while he was running the BNP, an action that led to an expensive employment tribunal settlement that the BNP is still struggling to pay.

Britain First was launched with a bang but seems to have fizzled out quite quickly with few people signing up. While Griffin might look on smugly at its expensive but ineffective launch, he might now be facing an even more vindictive opponent. Dowson, Golding and McBride might decide they have nothing more to lose and really tell all about what they know. ■

Asians assaulted as police ignore EDL demonstration

A row has broken out in East London over a police decision to ignore an English Defence League demonstration, reports **Matthew Collins**

While The English Defence League leaders Kevin Carroll and Stephen Yaxley-Lennon were hiding inside the Rendezvous bar in Chadwell Heath, Redbridge, up to 100 of their supporters draped in flags were spilling out onto the pavements already the worse for wear. Tempers were already flaring and the pushing and shoving was obstructing caterers from entering the pub.

Some had been there since 10am. The pub's landlord had kindly obliged the gang by opening early to allow them time to fill themselves up with their hooligan brews and courage. He even promised them a nice barbecue if the weather held up until their return.

As 11am approached, one solitary police car pulled over. The officer drove off after a few words with the EDL's stewards and the request to "please stay off the pavement".

Less than a kilometre away, on the same road, a dozen empty police vans sat idly in full view in the police car park. Redbridge police were nowhere to be seen. Chadwell Heath High Road was becoming deserted. People had stopped walking on the pavements; there was a hush descending.

Shortly after midday the EDL's stewards were out on the road again. This time it was to stop traffic so that their drunken mob could assemble. A solitary Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) sat on his bike neither hindering nor assisting the EDL. He stayed well away from the mob, perhaps wisely.

"I'm from Dagenham," he chirped. "There's police in Dagenham waiting for this lot." When asked what he could do to alert more police to the fact that there were now well over 200 racist thugs marching unmolested, he was unequivocal: "Nothing". The EDL would march through Redbridge with only him and his bicycle for company.

No sooner had the EDL

marched off than the first assault occurred. *Searchlight*'s photographer, no stranger to the EDL's mindless violence, was whipped across the face and shoved by an elderly thug with a flag pole. The PCSO smiled nervously but did nothing.

The EDL took it upon themselves to stop all traffic for the turn into Station Road. The PCSO didn't even have to assist. A drunk in a pig mask holding a flag shouted abuse in no particular direction. Customers in a pub came out to see what all the noise was about. Some shopkeepers shamelessly applauded them.

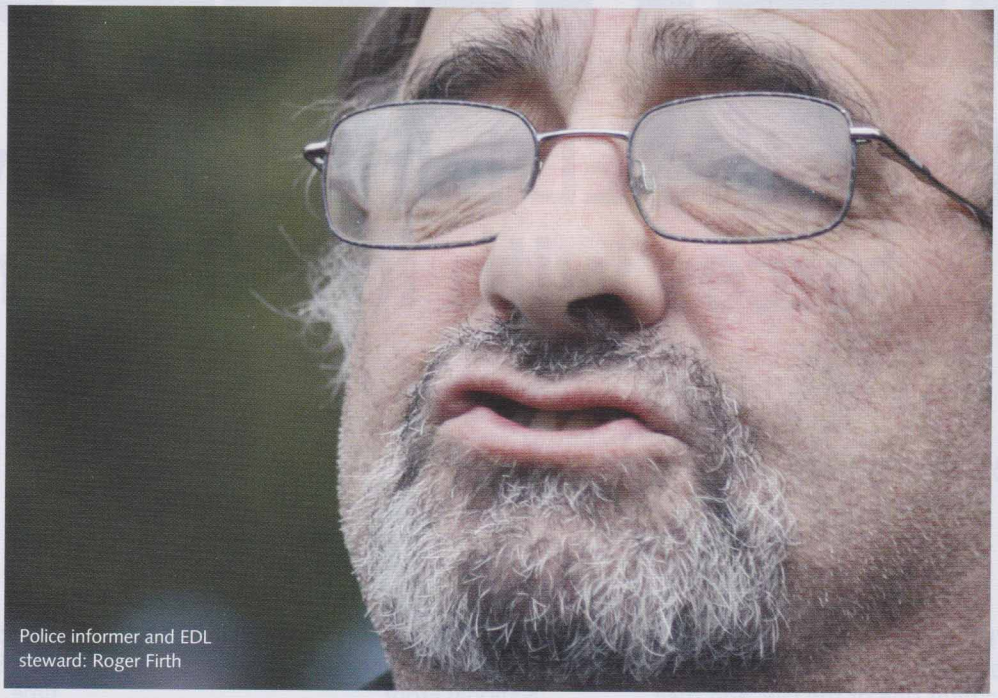
Outside Chadwell Heath station, the EDL mob blocked the road so they could lay flowers in memory of a young member who had died there on a previous activity. In the few hundred metres they had already walked, they had begun to get overly boisterous and aggressive. The PCSO cycled ahead. A busload of bewildered passengers stuck at a bus stop listened to their speeches. The marchers were heading for the site of a planned mosque in the Dagenham part of Chadwell Heath to prevent people from entering the building.

The PCSO cycled ahead to Valance Avenue and then there was more violence. A photographer was punched, kicked and pushed into a garden as the EDL broke free to control two lanes of traffic. Two young Asian men were standing looking bewildered in the middle reservation being called "Pakis" and "bombers". Despite being urged to act, the PCSO did not move.

The photographer began shouting at the PCSO as the fists and the kicks started and the two young men fell to the ground. Finally the PCSO reached for his radio. Almost exactly on the boundary between Dagenham and Redbridge, he called for help. ■

The EDL's supergrass

By **Sam King**



Police informer and EDL steward: Roger Firth

ROGER FIRTH can often be seen stewarding English Defence League demonstrations in the South East. What he has not revealed to his friends in the EDL is his past, in particular his imprisonment for his part in attempts to fix a Premier League football match.

In 1999 the floodlights went out at a Premiership match between Charlton Athletic and Liverpool, played at Charlton's ground in Greenwich, southeast London.

The failure was the work of a Malaysian betting syndicate allegedly linked to Chinese Triad gangs, and was part of their plan to rig football fixtures in England.

In August 1999, four men were sentenced for their part in the match fixing scandal. Two were Malaysian nationals – one an electrical expert – who each got four years. The third was a 49-year-old security guard from Eltham, south London, employed by Charlton Athletic. That man was Firth, now the defender of all things English in his pernicious role with the EDL.

Firth turned against the gang and became the chief prosecution witness in return for a reduced sentence. He had been paid £20,000 in cash to allow the Malaysians into the ground in his part of a "highly professional, technical, criminal operation".

All the men went on to plead guilty to conspiracy to cause a public nuisance. The judge described Firth's motive for helping the syndicate as plain and simple greed.

The gang was rumbled when Firth tried to bribe a fellow employee at the club with £5,000. Firth received an 18-month sentence, while his accomplices were later deported.

One newspaper at the time labelled Firth a "supergrass" and alleged that he was to get a new identity and address to protect him from the Triads' clutches.

A former Territorial Army soldier, Firth was in charge of daytime security at Charlton Athletic and was a former bodyguard for the football stars Glenn Hoddle and Paul Gascoigne.

When he is not stewarding for the EDL, Firth is one of the leaders of the tiny, radical anti-Muslim English Nationalist Alliance, a ragtag bunch of racists based mainly in outer east London and Essex.

If there is one thing the average EDL member despises it is a police informant, so it is no surprise that Firth has hidden his shady past. He has successfully managed to dodge the Triads; his next hurdle could be his comrades in the EDL.

BAD COMPANY

How the EDL infidels have joined forces with loyalist terrorists

By **Sam King**

WHILE THE ENGLISH Defence League's leaders struggle to keep themselves on the right side of the law, and their business operation afloat, the rival "Infidels" group has continued to immerse itself in the fringes of the British far right and loyalist paramilitary groups.

The Infidels are a faction of EDL supporters based mainly in the North East and North West who support a more aggressive and direct approach than the southern-based EDL leadership. In contrast to the EDL leaders Stephen Yaxley-Lennon and Kevin Carroll, the Infidels have a close relationship with the far right.

There is more to Infidel leader John "Snowy" Shaw than his appearance as a canny, reckless, out-of-work llama farmer. Since the EDL's inception, its leaders have desperately attempted to distance themselves from the far right. While this has certainly not kept racists, homophobes and antisemites away, they have managed to fool some people about their moderate views, including sections of the media and even the left.

In some of his earliest interviews Carroll spoke proudly of his and Yaxley-Lennon's Irish ancestry, lauding his partner's mixed-race daughter and the fact that they were children of immigrants themselves. That and the burning of a swastika flag immediately put them at odds with the remnants of Combat 18, the nazi terror group of the 1990s, who hung out in groups such as the Racial Volunteer Force and National Front.

Initially written off as some kind of flash-in-the-pan gormless chancer, Shaw might not have the cash-ready demeanour of Bedfordshire's dynamic duo of Lennon and Carroll, but is building his powerbase largely by presenting himself as the antithesis of the EDL leaders.

However Shaw does have distinct vulnerabilities. According to those close to him, he is reckless with relationships and has no money behind him and his operation.

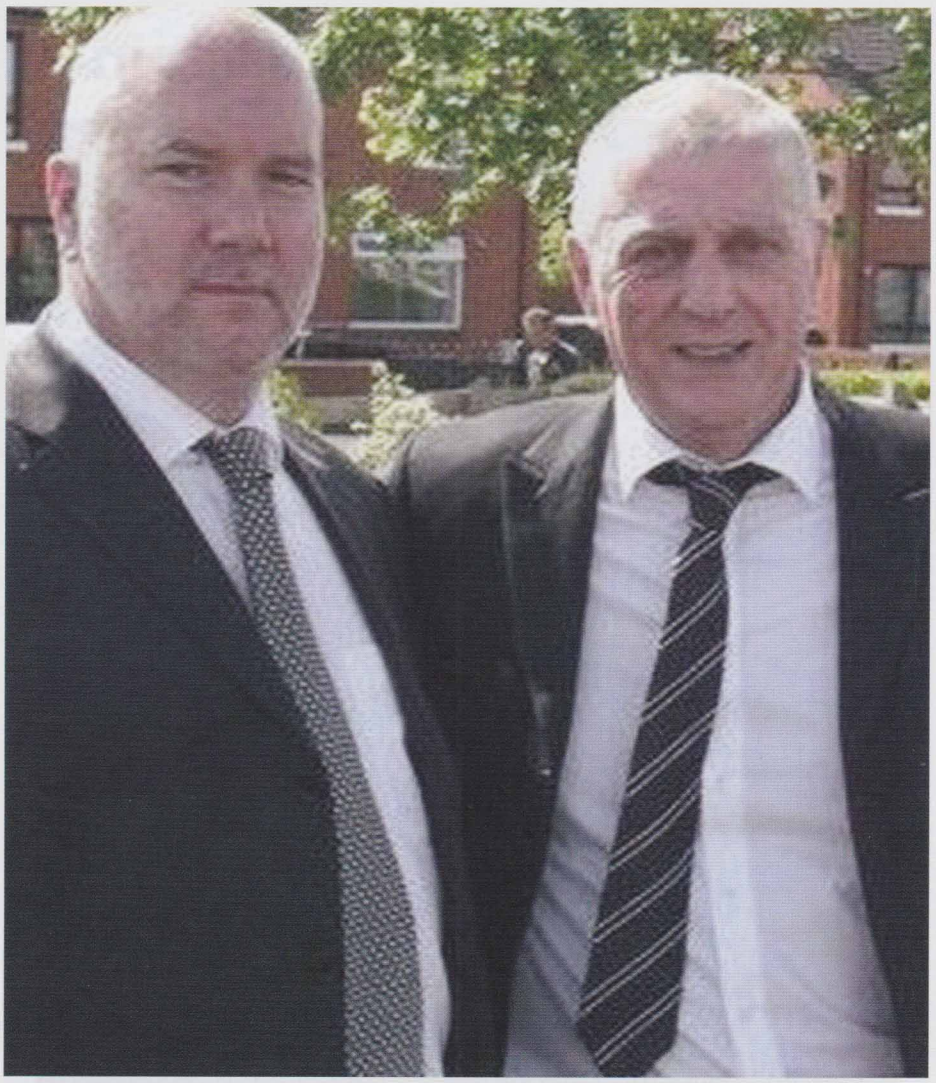
His fallout with Lennon and Carroll initially was partly the result of his apparent belief that he was entitled to as great a share of their money as of their limelight. Others have described him as overly clingy and suffering from bouts of self-doubt, paranoia, self loathing and jealousy. Having risen through the ranks of the EDL with the persona of a confident swashbuckling daredevil, Shaw envisaged himself as part of some sort of triangular leadership next to Lennon and Carroll. When the pair rejected and ridiculed this idea, Shaw developed a more antagonistic approach.

In May 2010 Shaw spent several days on the roof of a proposed mosque in Dudley. He was accompanied by the EDL's head steward and Ulster Defence Association runaway Leon McCreery (see *Searchlight* October 2010). At the time, he was fermenting the idea that he was being "shafted" by what EDL members in the north described as "southern wide-boys".

On the roof, Shaw and McCreey discussed the future of the EDL. McCreery regaled Shaw with stories about the UDA and Ulster Volunteer Force "taking the war to the enemies of Ulster". This struck a chord with Shaw. As a teenager he was keen to join the Army but his mother refused to allow it, citing the dangers of serving in Northern Ireland. Even now on his property in Knaresborough, Yorkshire, Shaw still dresses in combat fatigues while carrying a rifle under the excuse of hunting rabbits.

With an overwhelming sympathy towards Ulster loyalism running through English football hooligans, the majority of the EDL and the far right, Shaw believed he had hit upon the leadership's Achilles heel. Lennon and Carroll had already fought off one proto-loyalist attempted coup, when they faced off the supposed attentions of the former Belfast terrorist Johnny Adair and the German nazi Nick Greiger. As well as littering his web pages and Facebook profile with references to his loyalism and his hatred of "Taigs" (Catholics), Shaw also labours under the belief that the

John "Snowy" Shaw, leader of the Infidels



UDA boss Jackie McDonald (right) with Frank Portinari, failed gun runner.

Book of Revelations is a warning against Islam.

In his bid to associate himself with the loyalist cause, Shaw linked up with Frank Portinari, who led the UDA in London during the early 1990s at a time when the UDA's nom de plume, the Ulster Freedom Fighters, was carrying out dozens of sectarian murders in Northern Ireland and even discussing bringing the war to the British capital.

Portinari was charged with raising funds for the UFF's activities.
His association with Charlie Sargent, the convicted drug dealer (later convicted of murder) who led the wannabe terrorists of the Combat 18, was one way of doing this. The two shared a myriad of mutual interests, including the NF and British National Party. Several London UDA supporters were involved in gun-running to Belfast, including Portinari himself, who was arrested and later imprisoned, and Terry Blackham, a leading NF member who was arrested for attempting to smuggle a Czech sub-machine gun and 2,000 rounds of ammunition to Northern Ireland.

Searchlight was first made aware of the likelihood of the re-emergence of Frank Portinari last year when he was seen at one of the EDL's violent demonstrations in Dudley.

Shaw has now found his new mentor in Portinari, who has the kudos to strengthen his hand in the EDL.
He boasts loudly of his association with Portinari through their mutual involvement in loyalist marching bands on the mainland. This link has also allowed Shaw access to the NF in the North East and in Newcastle in particular, a group that is run by Blackham's close friend Simon Biggs.

Shaw describes his association with marching bands and his Leeds-based band, The Leeds Crown Defenders, as "good old bigotry", while Portinari is in constant and mentoring communication with him. The two were in Manchester together recently for another loyalist function where Portinari had reason to discipline Shaw for his zealous over-excitement.

In March 2010, UDA leader Jackie McDonald assured *Searchlight* that he would have no time for the EDL if it or its activists surfaced in Belfast. Now Portinari, one of his satellite commanders, has brought the UDA to the EDL.

In early June the NF issued a recorded rant against the EDL leaders, portraying them as little more than high street hooligans, in contrast to the NF's role as the only bulwark against multiracialism. The fingerprints of the Infidels appeared all over it.

The EDL leaders see Snowy Shaw's gang as little more than a honey trap, an "entrapment" as Carroll calls it. Its current company is one way of finding out. ■

Arrested again ... and again

TOMMY ROBINSON, aka Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (pictured), the leader of the English Defence League, had a particularly bad June, arrested twice for two different alleged crimes on the same day.

Lancashire police charged him with assault following an incident at the Blackburn EDL demonstration in April. He was due to appear before Blackburn Magistrates' Court on 24 June.

His second arrest was by Bedfordshire police for a public order offence that allegedly took place in Luton following an EDL protest against a meeting hosted by Richard Howitt MEP. At the meeting Howitt and five MEPs from other EU countries discussed racism and extremism, as part of his campaign against far-right groups across Europe. Lennon was due before Luton magistrates on 29 June.

Strict bail conditions have been imposed, banning him from attending any EDL demonstration or meeting. He is not allowed to use his computer for any EDL activity and has to attend a police station every Saturday.

Despite these restrictions Robinson still managed to get a message to his minions stating that due to police harassment of him he has decided there will no longer be any police liaison for any level of EDL activity. This would not be the first time the EDL has made such a threat and only time will tell what the EDL's next move will be.

Closed for business

EBAY AND PAYPAL both closed down accounts owned by the EDL last month, much to the annoyance of its leaders. PayPal froze the account, preventing the EDL withdrawing its money.

Announcing the news on their Facebook page, EDL admins tried to reassure angry members who had paid for items but not received them.

The reasons for the closure are unclear, but there is a strong possibility that after months of flaunting eBay's strict terms of service, the EDL broke one rule too many.

This will no doubt make a serious dent in the EDL's merchandising operation, which is crucial to the organisation.

The horse beater

THE EDL NEVER fails to amaze in the depths of depravity to which it will sink and its Blackburn demonstration in April was no exception.

Robert Gavin Tromans, from West Bromwich, tried to pull a female police officer off her horse. When that failed, he punched the horse in the neck at least eight times with a clenched fist.

He pleaded guilty at Blackburn Magistrates' Court to threatening behaviour and last month was sentenced to 120 hours' unpaid work and ordered to pay £85 costs.

Another delightful EDL supporter is Lisa Swales (pictured below), who also appeared in front of Blackburn magistrates following the march. Swales, from Bradford, pleaded guilty to assaulting a police officer by lunging forward and grabbing his testicles. She was sentenced to 12 weeks in prison, suspended for 12 months, and made subject to a supervision order.

London BNP organiser takes the cake

By **Gerry Gable**

EARLIER THIS YEAR nearly 60 people attended a meeting in southwest London, organised by the British National Party's Merton and Wandsworth branch, which brought together the remains of five party units decimated by the party's ongoing civil war. The guest speaker was London BNP's newly appointed regional organiser Stephen Squire, a well heeled businessman engaged in the commercial property market who comes from what the BNP described as "a longstanding nationalist family".

It took some guts for Squire to face an audience that a short while into the meeting had descended into four or five factions either arguing in support of party leader Nick Griffin or putting their own pet ideas for the future of the BNP. Foremost among the latter was Richard Edmonds, a former number two to the late John Tyndall, the party's nazi founder, and an extreme Jew-baiter.

Squire took the opportunity to establish his far-right pedigree and put himself across as being prepared to listen. In a conversation afterwards Squire told us that the meeting had been tough because the audience, led by Edmonds, was asking him detailed questions about Griffin and the party's finances. Edmonds had brought along a folder of documents but Squire said he had never seen the material and could only tell the audience what he knew, which was very little.

Reestablishing the BNP in London is likely to be far harder. According to Squire, London BNP is dying and Essex, once one the party's strongest regions, has disintegrated. A strategic thinker, Squire has devised a plan to lead leafleting activities and set up stalls in shopping centres and at local events all over London, using the remaining Griffin loyalists and even some of his internal opponents, to build the party's campaign for next year's London Assembly and mayoral elections.

In Barking and Dagenham the BNP is running a populist petition to cut the number of borough councillors to save taxpayers' money, though support is slow, with just 300 signatures after several weeks of effort. Party literature is better looking than before and activists on show less obviously thuggish, though helping him behind the scenes is the former street-brawling BNP councillor Bob Bailey. As well as in Dagenham, regular activities are held in west London, Croydon and Squire's home area of Enfield, where he has captured some favourable press coverage.

Steve Squire (left) ever loyal to his leader Nick Griffin

It is easy to see why Griffin appointed Squire to the party's top London position, which Griffin himself held temporarily after the previous organiser was sacked for questioning Griffin's financial mismanagement. Squire has more guts than Griffin in facing hostile members and, above all, he has a healthy sum in the bank. When Griffin visits London, Squire provides free accommodation.

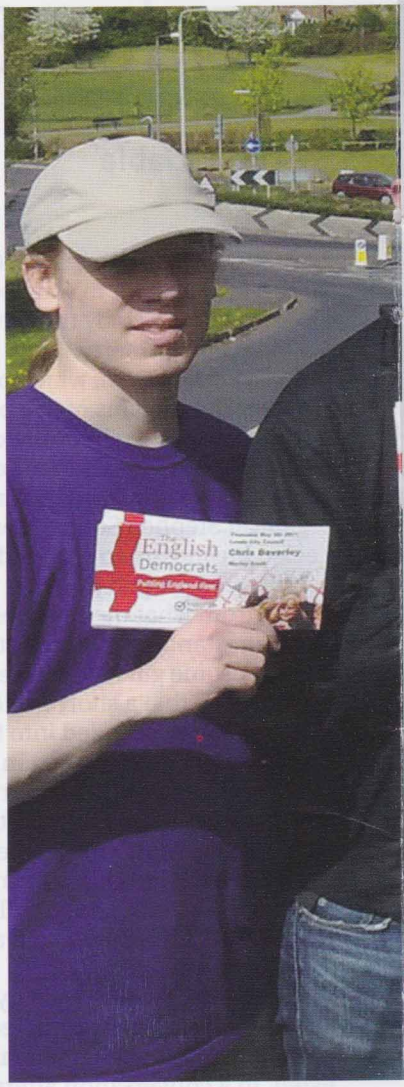
Squire's fascist pedigree is certainly impressive, though not in a respectable sense. His maternal grandparents were blackshirt supporters of Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in the 1930s. His father was Keith Squire, an activist in the National Front in the 1970s. Steve Squire described him as a successful property dealer, who owned a large estate in the West Country. Others remember him as a scrap dealer and slum landlord who was reported in the early 1980s to have accommodated an elderly tenant in a lock-up garage in Hornsey, then burned the garage down when he decided it would be more profitable to redevelop the site.

As an NF candidate in the October 1974 general election he polled 8% but spoilt the achievement by fighting with opponents as the results were declared, which got him a conviction for causing actual bodily harm and criminal damage. He was imprisoned under the Race Relations Act for putting up a sign reading "For sale to and English family" in the window of an Indian-owned shop. He later moved to Essex and died in 1999.

Steve Squire left the Merton and Wandsworth meeting in a hurry. Asked why, he laughed and explained that, apart from wanting to get away from all the shouting, he had won first prize in a raffle for a very nice cake and he wanted to get it away in one piece. ■

In our sights

David Williams and **Nick Lowles** on how the arrival of fascists in the English Democrats makes the party fair game for anti-fascists.



The English Democrats Party led by solicitor Robin Tilbrook is heading for a fall, though it might not realise it just yet. As the pace of the disintegration of the British National Party has increased, the EDP has set itself up as a repository for disillusioned members of Britain's premier fascist party, hoping to reap the rewards of its decline.

You reap what you sow, however, and in the case of the EDP this gamble could sound the death knell for its non-racist credentials.

How can the general public be expected to take seriously its denial of racism when the party seemingly operates an open door policy to some of the most hardline fascist activists in the country allowing them to stand as candidates and act as strategists?

A case in point is Chris Beverley, the former Yorkshire BNP regional organiser and a key link between the BNP and the nazi National Democratic Party (NPD) in Germany, whose chairman praised Hitler as a "great statesman". Beverley was pilloried on local radio last year when he refused to condemn Hitler.

Despite joining the EDP and standing as a candidate in May, which brought dozens of similarly hardline BNP members out of the woodwork to campaign for him, Beverley has continued to enjoy the support of his employer Andrew Brons, the BNP MEP for the Yorkshire and the Humber region. Despite joining the EDP, Beverley is unable to break the link with his fascist past, something that is confirmed by the continued support his blog gives to some of the most hardline racist and antisemitic far-right parties on the Continent.

Another EDP convert is Eddy Butler, the former BNP national organiser and another Brons employee. Butler is also one of the main protagonists pushing for Nick Griffin to be deposed as BNP chairman. He and Beverley remain particularly close and were recently photographed together touring the site of the Battle of Waterloo during a BNP visit to the European Parliament in Brussels.

The tour included a fiery meeting in the parliament building that culminated in Griffin charging into the session held by Brons and dishing out a bizarre mixture of threats and lies to party members. Footage of the meeting shows that it ended in a slanging match between Griffin and Butler with Butler challenging Griffin to substantiate the charge that Butler had told "lies" on his blog. The video that was released does not show Griffin being able to do so.

With Butler and Beverley so deeply involved in the internal political intrigues being played out within the BNP one must wonder where their true loyalties lie?

Tilbrook might believe that Butler's conversion is genuine or even that he can continue to pull the strings. He is undoubtedly wrong on both counts. Even a cursory glance at some of Butler's writings for the fascist press over the past 30 years reveals that he is obviously no "civic nationalist". He is using the EDP, it would appear, as a base from which he can play a part in repositioning the far right should the demise of the BNP move into a terminal stage.

Whether or not Tilbrook has any reservations about Butler, they have clearly not been great enough to stop him handing Butler the contract to run the EDP's 2012 London election campaign. Here Butler is showing his true colours. It is believed that he is pushing hard for Richard Barnbrook to be an EDP candidate, both for mayor and for the London Assembly.

Barnbrook was once the great white hope of the BNP. Elected as a BNP Assembly member in 2008, Barnbrook became the most successful far-right politician to date. His star has since ceased to shine. Thrown out of the BNP by Griffin after he grew too big for his boots, Barnbrook first tried to gain the backing of the English Defence League, which scorned his approaches, before applying to join the EDP, news of which created a minor furore.

Tilbrook is known to favour broadcaster Garry Bushell as candidate. Bushell has previously stood for the party, but would have to leave his job as a broadcaster on the nebulous prospect of electoral success. Tilbrook doubts that Barnbrook's conversion to English nationalism is genuine, an instinct that is undoubtedly correct. However, if he fails to put his foot down he risks being railroaded by Butler into fielding a known far-right racist fear-monger for mayor. Such an eventuality would again serve to sharpen scrutiny of the EDP.

Butler and Beverley are not alone. *Searchlight* understands that dozens of former BNP members have joined the party to date. The 2011 local elections provided an insight into the political weight that this influx is already wielding in the EDP. Roughly 20 of its 152 candidates were previously members of either the BNP or the more extreme National Front.

The influx of BNP members into the EDP has caused consternation among some party members, many of whom were already at odds with Tilbrook and Steve Uncles, the man who is blamed for encouraging the party to shift to the right. Many have resigned from the party in disgust and last month its Rossendale organiser Tony Judge was expelled.

Another who appears to have reservations is Michael Cassidy, the EDP's Yorkshire regional organiser who boasts masterminding the party's Doncaster mayoral victory. While he is known to have pushed for a link-up with the far right, he appears unhappy with Beverley's growing influence in Yorkshire, which he believes undermines his own position.

Other EDP members have left in west London, the North West and the Midlands. Amusingly enough some who split formed the One England party, but its efforts at respectability were undermined by the presence of Nigel Bromage as its West Midlands organiser. Bromage will be better known to regular *Searchlight* readers for his past life in Birmingham National Front and later the Combat 18 linked National Socialist Alliance. While Bromage is believed to have left his nazi politics behind, this did not stop Uncles from using his past against the breakaway party.

No doubt many BNP members joined the EDP as a tactical protest against Griffin's leadership and will rejoin the BNP if and when he is no longer leader.

If Tilbrook genuinely wants to establish his party as the non-racist voice of English nationalism then he needs to act decisively now. The presence of figures such as Beverley and Butler, the latter playing an increasingly important role in the EDP, totally undermines the EDP's reputation. Tilbrook also runs the risk of being outmanoeuvred, ideologically and strategically, by the likes of Butler and Beverley, both of whom have too many miles on the political clock to be content to be mere members and will invariably seek to bend the party to their own extremist views.

For the time being Tilbrook has chosen a political future with Butler, Beverley and co. This is his decision but one that makes him, in *Searchlight*'s view, fair political game. The EDP is not a fascist party but as long as it has fascists in its ranks then we will campaign against it.

Tilbrook is now the architect of his own misfortune. ■

What Wendy

By **Ray Filar**

> *I feel very acutely that whereas then I was the centre of everything, a bit ahead of everyone else, intelligent, active, creative – now I am literally nothing. For eight years, God help me, I have done nothing, gone nowhere, initiated nothing.*
>
> **Wendy Turner**, 15 January, 1979

The world of anti-fascist intelligence is a shadowy, mysterious one. For infiltrators to pass information back to anti-fascist groups, they require secrecy, privacy and the utmost discretion. For this reason, it is tempting, though perhaps not realistic, to envisage the moles that go undercover into fascist organisations as Bond-esque figures at the fringe of anti-extremist political warfare, their automatic fascist-detecting micro-gadget collections only rivalled by the incommunicable sharpness of their designer suits.

It is also tempting to gender anti-fascist intelligence officers as male. The occasional past female British National Party councillor does little to hide the collective swallowing of Nazi ideas about the "eternal feminine", bound to hearth and home, exemplified by the BNP leader Nick Griffin et al. Likewise, the English Defence League may co-opt the rhetoric of women's liberation when it can be used to criticise Islam, but it's telling that the "EDL Angels" are more concerned with posing in a calendar to raise money to help "the heroes ... our boys" than in advancing the cause of women's rights among the racist right.

Despite fascism's attitude towards women, despite wider society's past attitude towards women, and despite the huge danger to the infiltrator if caught, records even from the time of the anti-fascist 43 Group, which operated in the immediate postwar years, hint at the central role that women have played as intelligence agents. Step aside Bond fantasists; let Agent M have her turn.

A series of letters published in 43 Group member Len Rolnick's autobiography tell the story of Wendy Turner, a gentile woman who assumed the name "Helen Winnick" in order to go undercover for the 43 Group. Rolnick describes her as "politically aware, and somewhat of an intellectual". The tantalisingly short-lived correspondence between Turner and Rolnick is seemingly one of the only public records of Turner's intelligence work for the 43 Group, work that she was subsequently punished for. Yet it is work that deserves recognition.

As a mole, Turner became one of the secretaries to Oswald Mosley, then leader of the fascist Union Movement. In this position she would have been able to pass valuable information to the 43 Group's commanders: information

did

about outdoor and indoor meeting dates, locations, attendees, planned fascist activities and potential attacks. "I can only say that during the whole time I worked as closely as possible with and for the Jewish people," Turner wrote. She went on, "I started in politics when I was 11, in the Junior League of Nations, and from then on I was living about 6 different peoples' lives; studying; working; writing; initiating projects which might take 30 years to come to fruition ..."

Tragedy struck, however, when Turner was discovered to be a mole. She was tortured, an event that had a significant impact on the direction her life subsequently took. At the end of 1978 she wrote of her lamentable situation: committed to a mental asylum for seven and a half years, kept permanently depressed on a cocktail of drugs, "penned inside a mile of corridors; surrounded by sick, twisted, deformed, insane people; doing nothing, going nowhere, only longing with every cell of my body and mind and spirit for death".

The terse, clinical letter stating simply that "the late patient died herein on the 28th December, 1982 ... a verdict of 'Suicide' was recorded", does a great disservice not just to Turner's strength of character, but to her work as a political agent. Though it may be in the nature of mole-hood that we cannot know, now, which bits of Turner's information were used, neither can the importance of intelligence be understated. You cannot know what fascists are planning, you might say, if you haven't got someone there listening to them.

A 1948 copy of the 43 Group newspaper *On Guard* reveals a little more about the substance of women's intelligence work at the time. One little story sticks out, that of Doris Kaye, an ex-servicewoman, elsewhere described by a 43 Group member as one of "the most effective of all the Group's spies".

A report from a male infiltrator sets the scene for an encapsulation of a moment from the day-to-day of old school intelligence work. "I scribbled [the] address on to a scrap of paper and passed it to Doris. Some minutes later we were shepherding the main body of Blackshirts to the booking office. Doris, who moved away from us and on to the platform, was stopped by a woman who asked her the way to Liverpool Street. Doris told her, and the woman went upstairs with the precious scrap of paper in the cuff of her coat." Actions like these are tiny, maybe, but were crucial in giving the 43 Group the wherewithal physically to obstruct any prospective fascist shebang. This being the Group's raison d'être, such subtle acts, needed to maintain the constant feed of information, were central stuff.

Being a young female was actually a pretty good guise. It wasn't what people expected

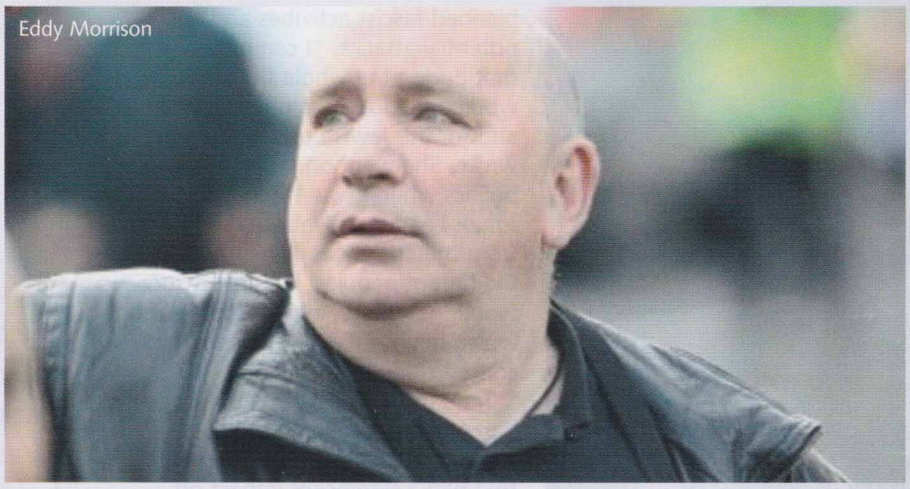
Enabling the 43 Group's actions from start to end, supporting them, working with, for and as part of the Group, were women. Women such as Wendy Turner and Doris Kaye, who endangered life and limb for the anti-fascist cause, who like Turner put themselves in the way of physical harm. Women as paper sellers, the rare woman as a street fighter, but mostly women as intelligence officers, women who were as dedicated as their male contemporaries, but whose stories are sometimes, regretfully, overlooked.

As Kate Taylor, who was involved in Searchlight's intelligence in the early 1990s, says, "Being a young female was actually a pretty good guise. It wasn't what people expected." ■

News from the sewers

Matthew Collins shines his Searchlight into the sewers of the far right

MORRISON OUSTED AS NF SPLITS AGAIN


Eddy Morrison

THE NATIONAL FRONT held another of its nights of the long knives last month, when Eddy Morrison and Tom Linden, two of the group that overthrew the party's previous chair and deputy chair in 2009, were unceremoniously removed from their positions on the directorate.

Morrison, who has passed through almost every extreme-right group in Britain, and Linden, a former British National Party organiser, had formed a double act as some sort of independent advisers for tiny nazi groups, with Morrison eventually finding a home for the pair in the NF, then led by the ageing Tom Holmes and Bernard Franklin.

They quickly went about ingratiating themselves with a frustrated membership antagonised by the NF's poor online presence and sporadic publication of party propaganda. An occasionally prolific blogger and always a keen self-promoter, Morrison quickly reformed his old drinking and fan club in Leeds as a power base for his activities and busied himself travelling the country speaking at NF branch meetings, while Holmes and Franklin tried desperately to rein the pair in. Holmes, a founder member of the NF, could do little more than issue the occasional party newsletter by post, warning that Morrison, who had twice before been in the party, was a troublesome and factional recruit.

Linden was installed as the NF's press spokesman, then Morrison appointed himself head of its media department but denied any wish to take the party over. By May 2009 he had full control over its website, which he turned into almost a mirror image of the amateurish site that he left with his last group, the British People's Party, which incidentally held and then withheld the domain name for the NF's old website.

With Morrison and Linden in charge of the party's communications, Holmes had to write to members asking them to send donations and subscriptions only to him and not to the Leeds and Solihull PO boxes that were in the hands of Morrison and his supporters. Not surprisingly the website gave different instructions from Holmes. A key supporter of Morrison and Linden was the veteran NF stalwart Norman Tomkinson, who wanted to emigrate to the USA and believed his party would be safe with the two men.

In September 2009, at a meeting to which allegedly neither Holmes nor Franklin was invited, Franklin was removed from his position and Holmes offered life presidency in return for standing down. Ian Edward was installed as chairman in January 2010 and Holmes retired from political life bitter and angry.

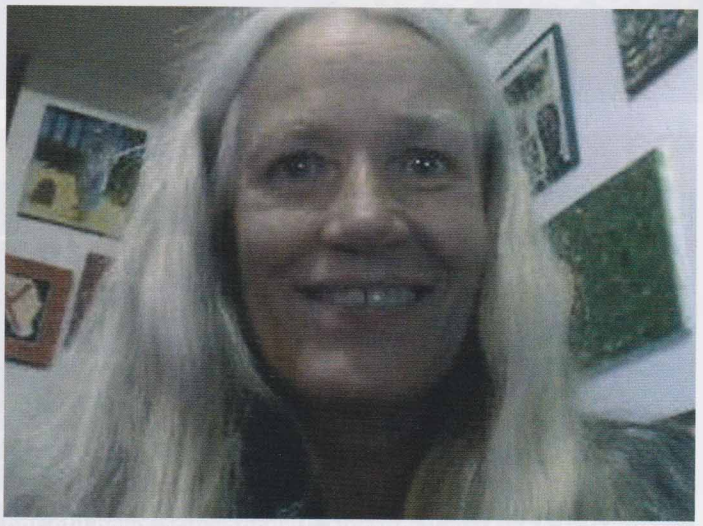
Morrison's biggest desire was to fashion himself as a new John Tyndall, the deceased nazi whom Morrison occasionally worshipped but who often attacked Morrison for his self promotion. Undeterred, Morrison relaunched a poor imitation of Tyndall's magazine *Spearhead*, an act that drew the extreme ire of Tyndall's widow Valerie and those who were close to the former NF and BNP leader.

Morrison was convinced that the NF could attract large numbers of disaffected BNP members by remodelling his material on Tyndall's. Indeed there were a few noticeable recruits including Chris Jackson, who was heavily involved in bringing about the BNP breakthrough in Burnley in 2002 and later unsuccessfully challenged Nick Griffin for the BNP leadership.

Morrison's demise came, as so often before, accompanied by unsubstantiated rumours about his return to reckless drinking binges and allegations of financial impropriety. Whether this contributed to the series of public disasters that was the NF's election campaign this year is unclear.

Ousted at the end of May, Morrison and Linden took the NF's online forum and *Spearhead* off to form another new party, apparently called British National Vanguard Front.

Slimelight club hosts fascist bands



Fascist singer Freya Aswynn (below) Troy Southgate of the New Right club

By **Alexander Gray**

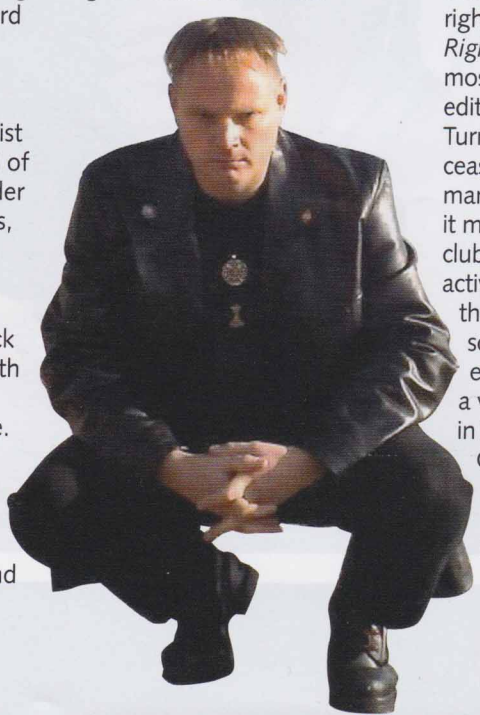
A GIG held at a nightclub called Slimelight in Islington, north London, on 25 June hosted bands and artists with deep roots in fascist circles, including Sol Invictus, Freya Aswynn, Sixth Comm and While Angels Watch.

The gig's headliner was the band Sol Invictus, whose founding member, Tony Wakeford, was a paid-up member of the fascist National Front. Although in 2007 he claimed that joining the NF had been the worst decision in his life and he had had no sympathies for the ideas of this extreme-right party for 20 years, he neither mentioned nor regretted his later involvement in the development of the new right IONA group led by Richard Lawson, a former high-ranking NF member and Wakeford's best man.

A member of the Socialist Workers' Party at the end of the 1970s and a co-founder of the leftwing band Crisis, Wakeford moved to the "other side" in the early 1980s. Together with Douglas Pearce and Patrick Leagas (now leader of Sixth Comm), he founded the fascist band Death in June. It was named after the Night of the Long Knives, the June-July 1934 purge of the "left-wing Nazis" such as Gregor Strasser and Ernst Röhm, head of the *Sturmabteilung*, venerated by Wakeford, Pearce and Leagas.

Ousted from Death in June, Wakeford founded the NF-associated band Above the Ruins. The band released only one album, in addition to contributing one track to the compilation *No Surrender! Vol 1* released by the notorious German nazi label Rock-O-Rama Records in 1985. Wakeford continued distributing the album through his Tursa label until 2007, in spite of his alleged regret for his NF membership.

Sol Invictus has been hugely influenced by Italian fascist "philosopher" Julius Evola, whose works exerted great influence on the terrorists behind the Bologna bombing in August 1980. Ironically, Wakeford's brother Steven moved away from far-right politics and is now a Fire Brigades Union officer and antifascist activist.



Also on the bill was Dutch-born Freya Aswynn. A former key activist in John Yeowell's pagan Odinic Rite group, Aswynn has been known for her hateful racist rhetoric and involvement in several fascist Neofolk/post-Industrial acts, including Sixth Comm and Sol Invictus. These days she tours alternative culture fairs carrying out pagan rituals such as casting the runes.

Aswynn was a close associate of Ralph Harrison, one of the founders of the rightwing nationalist magazine *Right Now!*, which during most of its existence was edited by the Irish fascist Derek Turner. After Right Now! ceased publication in 2006 many of those associated with it moved into the New Right club, run by the lifelong fascist activist Troy Southgate, and the nazi and fascist arts scene. Turner himself now edits the *Quarterly Review*, a venerable old title revived in 2007 by the former Conservative MP Sir Richard Body.

Another associate of Southgate is Dev, the lead musician of While Angels Watch. Dev is also a close collaborator of Leagas and Ian Read, a former member of Sol Invictus, leader of the band Fire + Ice and editor of the pagan *Rûna* magazine.

Islington Labour MP Emily Thornberry said: "It's a shame and a disgrace that these peddlers of poison are playing in Islington. We have a proud history of tolerance in this borough." However, the concerns voiced by Thornberry, as well as by antifascist musicians and the organisation Love Music Hate Racism, fell on deaf ears among Slimelight's management.

While Slimelight owner May Uan Mak confesses that he is not "comfortable with the bands" and admits that "these bands do have clear fascist connections", he controversially adds that "art can be fascist too. The fascist language can be just as powerful as any other language in the world." Widely advertised on the largest nazi internet forum Stormfront, the Slimelight gig was destined to become a meeting point for those who are skilful not only in fascist language, but also in fascist activities.

In October Slimelight is putting on another gig featuring bands associated with misogyny, nazism, paedophilia and sadism. ■

Roundup

RUSSIA

Trial exposes nazi state links

From **Ulyana Bobrova** in Moscow

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN Russian nazis and semi-official structures have come under increasing scrutiny following the convictions in May of Nikita Tikhonov and his partner Evgenia Khasis for the murders of the lawyer Stanislaw Markelov and journalist Anastasia Baburowa. Tikhonov was given life and Khasis at least 18 years in prison after a trial that attracted unusually high levels of public attention and revealed new information.

According to statements during the trial by Ilya Goryachev, a leader of the extreme-right Russky Obraz (Russian Image) and one of the chief prosecution witnesses, the Kremlin-oriented youth movement Mestnye (Local People) has actively tried to recruit nazi activists in the Moscow region. One of its officers, Leonid Simunin, even contacted Tikhonov about weapons.

Because of its contacts in Russia's political class, Russky Obraz is one of the most successful far-right projects and has even received permission to stage rallies and concerts featuring openly nazi bands such as Kolovrat. Tikhonov was one of its founders and published an eponymous magazine, although he had let his membership lapse.

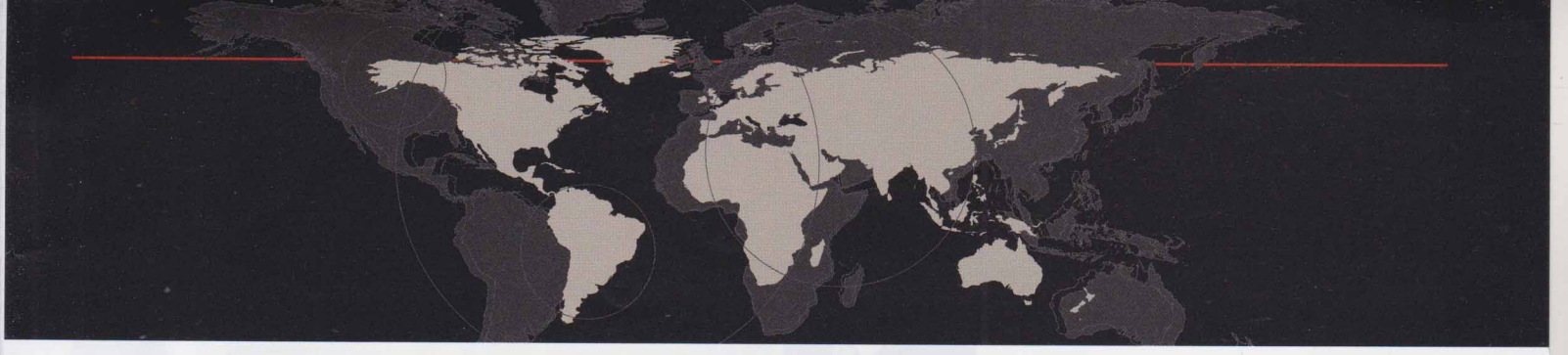
Goryachev's appearance as a prosecution witness has put Russky Obraz in a difficult position with its erstwhile extremist friends. Goryachev has fled to Serbia to avoid any acts of revenge.

Though a legal political organisation, Russky Obraz has also functioned as a cover for shadowy violent outfits such as United Brigades 88 (OB88) and Combat 18. Tikhonov belonged to OB88 as did Alexei Korshunov who is wanted in connection with the murder of the judge Eduard Chuvashov in April 2010 and the killing of the anti-fascist Ivan Khutorskoi in November 2009.

In a bid to distance itself from Russky Obraz, the banned Movement against Illegal Immigration (DPNI) has joined with the hardcore nazi Dmitri Demushkin, former leader of the outlawed Slavic Union, and others to set up a new alliance called Russkiye (Russians). Russkije is leading negotiations with the extreme-right populist Vladimir Zhirinovsky on co-operation in the campaign for the parliamentary elections in December.

Meanwhile, almost all the defendants in the nazi Borovikov-Voyevodin gang in St Petersburg have been sentenced to long prison terms for a series of murders, including that of the anti-fascist academic Nikolai Girienko in June 2004, after a trial lasting more than 18 months. ■

Nazi murderers: Evgenia Khasis and Nikita Tikhonov



SWEDEN

Antisemite helped build WikiLeaks network in Sweden

Jonathan Leman reports for *Expo* in Stockholm

A NOTORIOUS Russian-Swedish antisemite was actively involved in establishing a Swedish network for WikiLeaks, according to email correspondence received by *Searchlight*'s Swedish sister publication *Expo*.

According to Kristinn Hrafnsson, a spokesperson for Wikileaks, Israel Shamir (pictured) acted as a freelance writer on "a project that came and went". He told *Expo*: "We have not been scanning all the thousands of journalists that we have been associated with in some way."

But the emails between Shamir and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange that *Expo* has obtained reveal not only that the two men have cooperated for several years but that in 2008 Shamir was asked to recommend potential associates for WikiLeaks in Sweden.

Shamir replied by recommending his son, Johannes Wahlström, without revealing their relationship, writing only: "He is Swedish citizen and lives in Sweden. Probably he'll be able to give advice about press freedom."

In February the BBC's Panorama programme revealed that Assange had praised Shamir's work a year before this and invited him to work for WikiLeaks.

An email from Shamir in June 2010 showed he was still playing a part in the Swedish WikiLeaks network. He wrote: "I have a lot of good guys who can help to analyse the treasure, and it would be good to start spreading the news. I am now in Paris, and people want to know more! Tuesday I go to Sweden, and there is a whole operation for your benefit!" Assange replied: "There certainly is! Tell the team to get ready; Give them my best; We have a lot of work to do."

Both Shamir and Wahlström have been criticised for antisemitic writings. Shamir said "every person who adheres to God should deny the Holocaust" while Wahlström wrote an article in 2005 claiming that the "Israeli regime controls the Swedish media". Wahlström has repeatedly defended his father and is flagged up on Shamir's website as a "distinguished contributor".

UKRAINE

Ukrainian and pro-Russian nationalists clash on Victory Day

From **Anton Shekhovtsov** in L'viv

VICTORY DAY, which commemorates the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 and is celebrated in Ukraine on 9 May, was marked by clashes between two opposing ultranationalist camps: the Ukrainian far-right Freedom Party and the pro-Russian far-right organisations "Watch", the Motherland Party and Russian Unity.

The conflict was triggered by a decision by pro-Russian ultranationalists to celebrate Victory Day in L'viv, one of the Freedom Party's strongholds in Western Ukraine.

To add fuel to the fire, on 6 May the Ukrainian Parliament passed a law making it compulsory to display the red flag alongside the Ukrainian state flag on Victory Day. The Freedom Party, which considers the red flag a symbol of Soviet occupation, was infuriated. The Motherland Party decided to increase the level of provocation and humiliate its political opponents by staging a march, under a huge 30m high red flag, in L'viv, where the Freedom Party had made big gains in the city council elections in October 2010.

On 9 May, pro-Russian activists, Second World War veterans and representatives of the Russian Consulate marched to the Hill of Glory memorial in L'viv. At first, Ukrainian right-wingers, who also chanted ultranationalist slogans, verbally insulted them. Soon the Ukrainian extremists started to rip St George ribbons, one of the symbols of Victory Day that are especially popular in Russia, from people's shirts.

This resulted in scuffles and a Freedom Party member was shot in the leg by Svyatoslav Sopil'nyk, the son of a former high-ranking police officer, with what seems to have been a rubber bullet. Later, Sopil'nyk claimed he had acted in self-defence and no charges were brought.

During the ceremony on the Hill of Glory, about a dozen Ukrainian ultranationalists broke the police barricade and tried to disrupt the commemoration, violently resisting police. After the clashes, police charged three Ukrainian far-rightists with various offences.

Roundup

NETHERLANDS

Wilders party enters Senate coalition

By **Jeroen Bosch** for *Alert!* and Antifa-Net in Amsterdam

Geert Wilders carries a giant Greek drachma note as a protest against financial aid to Greece

THE FREEDOM PARTY (PVV) helped the right-wing minority government scrape together a majority in the upper house of the Dutch parliament when the 566 members of the Netherlands Provincial Assemblies chose the Senators at the end of May.

The vote was crucial for the coalition partners, the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the Christian Democrats (CDA), which together hold only 27 seats in the 75-strong Senate. Even with the ten senators of Geert Wilders's PVV they still needed to enlist the support of the single senator of the Christian fundamentalist Reformed Political Party (SGP) to have a majority.

This SGP opposes women in politics, takes the Bible as its guide, is against abortion and thinks homosexuality is a disease. To bring the party on board the VVD has proposed no further Sunday opening of shops, no adjustments to the law on insults to religion and no more extensions to abortion or euthanasia laws.

Needless to say, the SGP and PVV are hostile to Islam but progressive dissidents in the CDA remain silent, even when Wilders runs amok in parliament with loud claims that "imported immigrants" have been used over the years as an "Islamic voting mob".

Although it was the main winner of the elections in the country's 12 provinces on 2 March, the PVV will enter government only in Limburg, the home ground of Wilders and several other PVV parliamentarians. The CDA, despite its huge losses, will govern in ten of the 12 provinces, though in nine in coalition with the VVD.

In Limburg, the PVV will join them, the first time it has entered a provincial government. During coalition talks, the PVV failed to persuade the VVD and CDA to impose a halt to building mosques in Limburg and a ban on headscarves and halal meals in provincial parliamentary buildings. The party will, however, provide an officer with responsibility for "safety and livability". It did not take long before the PVV sparked its first row with the opposition after its chairman Laurence Stassen, who is also an MEP, called a proposed mosque in Roermond a "hate palace".

In the meantime, Wilders travelled to Canada to further his so-called International Freedom Alliance project as a guest of the Christian right, which like the SGP takes the Bible literally and opposes gay rights. Speaking in London, Ontario, Wilders recalled how Canadians helped liberate the Netherlands in the Second World War and said he was now helping ensure that Canada does not fall under the yoke of Islam. Of the 34 million Canadians only 2% are Muslim.

At the end of May, an Amsterdam court ruled against an application by Wilders's lawyer, Bram Moszkowicz, that the case against him should end because Wilders could not get a fair trial. The court again viewed the anti-Islam video *Fitna* that Wilders made in 2008, which led to 61 complaints to the police. A few days later the prosecution asked for the dismissal of all charges against Wilders on the grounds that his remarks were about Islam not about Muslims, so he could not be guilty of insulting a group because such an insult would have to be about persons.

Michiel Pestman, one of the lawyers for the organisations that brought charges privately against Wilders, argued that Wilders's behaviour had led to more discrimination and more anti-Muslim violence.

On 1 June Wilders told the court: "I stand here because of my words. I spoke, I speak and I will continue speaking. Many have been silent, but not Pim Fortuyn, not Theo van Gogh and not me because the Netherlands is under threat of Islam, an ideology of hate and destruction.

"Islam" he claimed "threatens Westerns standards and values ... and silence is treason. Don't turn off the light in the Netherlands. Dismiss the charges against me."

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Far right gains in Spain but fails in Portugal

From **Sandra Cortes** in Madrid and **Jean-Yves Camus** in Paris

Josep Anglada, leader of PXC

THE EIGHT PARTIES that comprise Spain's fragmented extreme right won 88 council seats in municipal elections on 22 May, in which the ruling Socialists were hammered. The far-right vote is seen as evidence of increasing racism, the main theme of the far right's campaign.

The most successful party was the Platform for Catalonia (PXC), which increased its council representation from 17 to 67 seats. The party, led by the Islamophobic Francoist Josep Anglada and backed by the Austrian Freedom Party and the millionaire racist Patrik Brinkmann, sparked controversy with nakedly racist advertising that has prompted a hate crime investigation.

España2000 won three more seats in Valencia and one in the Madrid suburb of Alcala de Henares, with over 4,000 votes. Among its new councillors in Valencia is the nazi Alejandro Serrador, a member of the Valencia FC Ultra Yomus hooligan mob. Serrador, who has a history of criminal violence, was charged after a police raid in 2005 against a right-wing gang called Frente Antisistema (FAS) that had touted weapons, hounded immigrants and promoted nazi ideology. Twenty-two people are on trial for these offences, including Pedro Cuevas the murderer of the young anti-racist Guillem Agulló in Valencia in 1993.

Democracia Nacional (DN) in Castille, Iniciativa Habitable (IH) in Galapagar and the nazi Movimiento Social Republicano (MSR), sister party of the British National Party, also won seats.

Meanwhile on 3 June, the Spanish Supreme Court acquitted nazis from the Circle of Indo-European Studies (CEI), the Kalki bookshop and the publisher New Republic Editions (ENR) after they appealed against their convictions for inciting racism. The verdict is a blow to the fight against fascism and has been sharply criticised by the Hate Crimes Prosecutor in Catalonia and human rights organisations. The Jewish community in Spain has warned that the decision could turn Spain into a sanctuary for nazi groups.

Among those originally indicted in the ENR case were Juan Antonio Llopart, a leader of the MSR, and Ramón Bau, the former secretary general of the hardcore nazi CEDADE group and author of several nazi publications.

The Supreme Court took the view that to spread nazi ideas is not a criminal offence unless it involves "a real danger of creating a climate of hostility that can be realised" in violence. This decision goes against the principles set out by the European Commission, the Agency for Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Council of Europe, via the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Human rights organisations have announced that they will launch a campaign calling for the reform of the Spanish Penal Code to end impunity for nazi ideas in Spain.

The partial electoral success of the Spanish far right was not mirrored in the general election in Portugal on 5 June when right-wing extremists failed to gain from the collapse of the left. The ruling Socialist Party lost heavily, receiving only 28.1% of the vote and giving way to the centre-right Social Democrats, who took 38.6%, and the conservative CDS-PP, which polled 11.7%.

The Portuguese extreme right remains marginal but the fascist Partido Nacional Renovador (PNR) fielded candidates in all constituencies for the first time. The PNR got a mere 17,620 votes (0.3%) nationally.

The archconservative Catholic pro-life party Partido por la Vida (PPV) took an insignificant 8,210 votes. Similarly, the anti-EU Partido da Nova Democracia got 11,671 votes and the monarchist Partido Popular Monarquico (PPM) 14,978 votes. The PPM is a centre-right party that took part in the post-1974 democratic transition. ■

Roundup

Heinz-Christian Strache

AUSTRIA

Strache visits Strasbourg in alliance bid

From **Martin Jordan** for UNITED in Vienna

THE LEADER of the far-right Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) held discussions with other far-right parties at the European Parliament on 8 June in an attempt to persuade the right-wing Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) group to admit his party.

It was the first time Heinz-Christian Strache had visited his party's two MEPs, Andreas Mölzer and Franz Obermayr, in Strasbourg, where he held talks with the Northern League from Italy, Flemish Interest and the French National Front (FN).

Francesco Speroni from the Northern League who chairs the EFD jointly with Nigel Farage of the UK Independence Party, told Strache that the FPÖ's negative image in the international media is still blocking the creation of a common group. Strache says there are "one or two individuals" who would prevent the FPÖ's entrance to the EFD but mentioned no names.

The highlight of the day was a joint press conference, "Globalisation, migration and economic threats in the EU", by Strache and Marine Le Pen, president of the FN. Strache declared his solidarity with Le Pen, who demanded that France should abandon the euro and berated the EU as a "totalitarian project to oppress the European peoples".

In an attempt to improve the FPÖ's reputation and help build unity among European far-right parties, Strache is keen to launch a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) in favour of a tighter EU asylum policy. The ECI is a new form of public participation in shaping EU policy introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. It allows one million citizens from at least seven EU states to petition the European Commission to act on their request. However Strache, who visited Moscow in May to make advances to Vladimir Putin's United Russia party, is unsure which other parties might support such an initiative.

The end of the rather dry press conference was marked by Strache freaking out when an Austrian reporter asked Le Pen what she thought about FPÖ politicians who abstained from a recent vote to revoke the honorary citizenship of Adolf Hitler that still formally exists in some Austrian towns. The FPÖ's argument against this admittedly late symbolic act is that, legally, all honorary citizenships expire on death and that the Allied occupation administration had already deprived Nazi war criminals of any titles. ■

BELGIUM

Former FN president barred

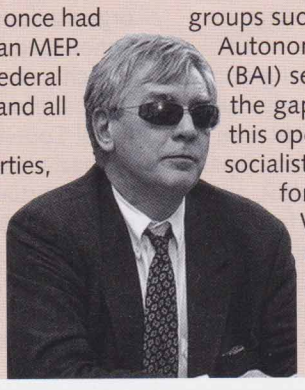
From **Wim Haelsterman** for AFF/Verzet-*RésistanceS* in Brussels

A FORMER PRESIDENT of the extreme-right Belgian National Front (FN) cannot practise as a lawyer for a year after the disciplinary board of lawyers on the Brussels court circuit suspended him for racist behaviour.

National television viewers were shocked to see a video shot in 2008 of Michel Delacroix (pictured) singing an antisemitic song. The resulting scandal forced him to quit the presidency of FN and did little good for the party's reputation.

Nevertheless he was allowed to remain an active member of the FN's political bureau. Incidents such as this have led to the further marginalisation of the far-right party which once had several MPs and an MEP.

Since the last federal election, the FN and all Wallonia's other extreme-right parties, such as Wallonia First, have been moribund. They have no representatives in either the federal parliament or the regional parliaments of Brussels and Wallonia. This is unsurprising given their lack of members, organisation and credible personalities. No new far-right party has emerged that might benefit from the FN's decline.



Instead, new radical, semi-clandestine, militant groups such as Base Autonome Identitaire (BAI) seem to be filling the gap. Members of this openly national socialist movement, formed in Wallonia in early 2010 and consisting mostly of nazi skinheads, participated in the annual far-right demonstration on 8 May across the border in Paris.

In France, BAI is regarded as the Belgian branch of Third Position, a nazi movement founded in the early 1980s and recently re-established. In Belgium, BAI participates in the activities of Blood and Honour Flanders.

A similar national socialist group called Identity Youth of Wallonia, formed last year in the Liège region, is linked to Mouvement Nation, an outfit that wants a unified Europe and the creation of a "patriotic opposition" in the Walloon region.

ITALY

Fiore's FN suffers electoral disaster

By **Alfio Bernabei**

ROBERTO FIORE'S Forza Nuova (FN) polled under 0.5% at the recent local election in Milan, where he had invested money and staged public demonstrations in an effort to raise the party's profile.

Media attention focussed on Milan because of a significant confrontation between the ruling coalition of Silvio Berlusconi's People of Freedom party (PDL) with the Northern League, and the left-wing Democratic Party (PD). The aggressive FN tactics allegedly involved damage to stands of political opponents, occupation of buildings and beatings. Three days before the election police raided the homes of the FN's mayoral candidate Marco Mantovani and nine of his supporters. Fascist insignia and some weapons were seized.

The election resulted in a resounding defeat for the PDL/Northern League, which lost thousands of votes. But FN claimed its own victory: "We gained an extra 408 votes, for a total of 2,088", which amounts to about 0.35% of all the votes counted. The FN disaster was replicated in other municipalities leaving Fiore to cite Trieste as a beacon of hope. Here, a number of small right wing parties, including FN, formed their own coalition and won 11% of the vote.

For the future Fiore will continue to concentrate on getting more councillors elected in municipalities of 10-20,000 inhabitants and exploiting issues of interest to the media.
An example was the invitation to Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party, to visit the island of Lampedusa where thousands of immigrants are landing from North Africa.

Inspired by Marine Le Pen's earlier visit, it turned into a complete fiasco. Most pictures show Fiore and Griffin in the company of no more than a half a dozen people, ignored by the media. Fiore wrapped up the farce with some glossy jargon "Griffin and I wish to put across the idea of a Europe shared by several nationalist movements. It is from Lampedusa that this idea will advance gaining ground nationally and at European level. Griffin keeps the situation of Lampedusa close to his heart. He has understood its centrality in the continental political developments".

All Griffin managed to do was be photographed with a slogan used by fascists that read, "I have a fascist heart, I don't give a f*** and I spit on the face of the entire world!"

The failure of the PDL/Northern League attempt to use the influx of immigrants to canvass the racist vote is encouraging but it may be overoptimistic to see this as the start of a widespread conscious rejection of racism.

Roberto Fiore (centre) welcomes Nick Griffin (right of Fiore) in front of a fascist slogan on the wall to their left

Roundup

FRANCE

Far-right radicals march for Joan of Arc

From **Jean-Yves Camus** in Paris

Far-right extremists parade through Paris Photo: Reflex

THERE IS CLEARLY not enough room for two rival extreme-right parties in France, at least not on the electoral level. That is the main lesson to emerge from the annual Joan of Arc memorial demonstration in Paris on 8 May by those far-right groups that reject democracy as a whole and others that want to build an alternative to the National Front (FN) because of the new course imposed by its leader, Marine Le Pen.

An estimated 700 ultra-rightists took part, 30% fewer than last year. As usual, a hundred monarchists from Action Française headed the procession, then scurried away to avoid being mistaken for the fanatics following them. These included Pierre Sidos, the leader of the fascist Oeuvre Française, whose political activity dates back to his youth in the pro-Nazi Franciste party, and Alexandre Gabriac, a 21-year-old FN regional councillor from Grenoble, sacked by his party the previous week for giving a stiff-arm salute at a meeting and for being an Oeuvre Française member.

Although the FN secretary general Steeve Briois warned party members not to attend, Yvan Benedetti, an elected official in the Lyon area, took part. Benedetti, second-in-command to the FN's vice-president Bruno Gollnisch, who also belonged to Sidos's rabidly antisemitic group, was summoned to appear before the FN's disciplinary commission on 29 June and could face expulsion. Benedetti, it seems, is now launching his own youth movement, Jeunesses Nationalistes.

The most important group on the march was the Nouvelle Droite Populaire (NDP), an umbrella organisation for disgruntled FN members, which intends to contest the 2012 presidential and legislative elections. Led by top malcontents such as the former MP Robert Spieler and former FN executive member Roland Hélie, the NDP has an agenda of opposition to Islam, multiculturalism and immigration and identifies itself as an "identity" movement, although it opposes the other anti-Islam outfits such as Bloc Identitaire, Pro-Köln and the English Defence League because they are not anti-Israel enough.

With a campaign slogan of "No to minarets", several NDP candidates' lists got 2% of the vote in the 2010 regional elections. The NDP's Alsace branch, which is more radical than the national leadership, distributed leaflets calling for the freedom of the jailed Hungarian Guard thug György Budaházy. With the NDP was Pierre Vial, whose *völkisch* Terre et Peuple movement keeps the racialist beliefs of the "new right" the way they were in the 1970s.

Bringing up the rear of the march were splinter groups such as the fascist and Catholic fundamentalist Renouveau Français; the nazi Front des Patriotes, a mob of skinheads associated with the most active French Oi band Lemovice, based in Limoges; the fascist Front Comtois, based in Besançon; Vlaams Huis from Lille; and the Belgian movement Nation. Although several of its members were raided by the police several weeks before, the Nationalistes Autonomes from Lorraine were still a sizeable group at the event.

The final group was the usual Strasserite rabble in the shape of Troisième Voie, the new "solidarist" group led by the former skinhead heavy Serge Ayoub', and the Groupe Union Défense, a violence-prone mixture of boneheads and upper-class fascist students.

No major incidents occurred and, in the afternoon at the same place near the Louvre museum, Catholic fundamentalists gathered just over 2,000 for their own Joan of Arc Day, organised by the Institut Civitas. This march was attended by clergymen from the schismatic Catholic sect the Society of St Pius X, Carl Lang from the Parti de la France and several FN executives including Jean-Pierre Reveau and Louis de Condé, both opponents of Marine Le Pen.

These fringe movements will not impair the new course of FN. In fact, they may even be useful to Le Pen as she will not have to sack those who will quit her party anyway to join the radicals, thus avoiding bitter internal feuds.

Column

Stateside

Killing the ones you love (and the ones you don't)

By **Leonard Zeskind** for the Institute for Research & Education on Human Rights

IT HAS BEEN a rough six months for white nationalists. They have had some difficulty holding on to meeting venues. They keep getting sentenced to long prison terms for violent crimes. And they have had a hard time with friends and family.

Consider Edgar Steele. A long-time white nationalist and active Holocaust denier, Steele worked as an attorney, once unsuccessfully defending Aryan Nations headman Richard Butler. Steele lived in Sandpoint, Idaho, with Cyndi, his wife of 25 years. He claims now she is the love of his life. But he was convicted on 5 May 2011 of hiring a hit man last year to kill her. The trial was lurid with details and tape recordings. A pipe bomb was found under her car. But Steele claims it was all a government set-up. Cyndi believes him, even though he was apparently woman-shopping in Ukraine all the while.

Then there was Jeff Hall, 32, the southwestern regional director of the National Socialist Movement. He was one of the NSM's better organisers, and in 2010 he ran for the water board of his home county in Riverside, California. He lost but received 6,700 votes, a whopping total for someone who often used to parade in a brownshirt uniform with swastika armband. During the night of 1 May, he was shot in the chest while asleep. His ten year-old son has been arrested and charged with homicide. The NSM has a nice memorial page on its website and you would never guess from its content that he was apparently murdered by someone so near and dear.

Don't forget David Lynch, a skinhead organiser since the late 1980s. One of his first arrests was in Edgewater, Florida, in March 1989, while distributing flyers for an organisation known as the American Front. He was charged with carrying a concealed weapon. At the time, American Front was headquartered in Portland, but then faded from the scene. Lynch eventually moved to Sacramento, California, and reestablished the American Front as a force on the skinhead scene.

On 4 March Lynch was found shot dead in his home. Police have named as a "person of interest" his friend Charles Demar. A member of the band Stormtroop 16, Demar was apparently a drug abuser as well as a neo-Nazi. American Front will probably not survive Lynch's demise.

Travis Ricci of the Vinlanders, a skinhead organisation with a long history of brutishness, was recently sentenced to 22 years in an Arizona prison for smashing up his girlfriend. She lived, but Ricci will later face the death penalty in another case. And Albert Glaxiola was on trial as *Searchlight* went to press. He faces two murder charges in a now infamous 2009 case. A gang of Minutemen led by Shawna Forde gunned down a Latino man and his daughter in cold blood in their home in Arizona. The other participants, Forde and Jason Bush, have already received death sentences.

The white power skinhead scene will survive its bloodletting, but the uniformed and boots and braces wings of the white nationalist movement wield little influence outside their immediate circles. The suit and tie tendency, however, has exerted a significant pull on the political mainstream since Pat Buchanan's Republican primary campaign in 1992 and the subsequent emergence of the anti-immigrant movement. Nevertheless, its success is not unalloyed.

Take American Renaissance. From a small circulation newsletter, its founder Jared Taylor has built a centre of intellectual discussion with regular conferences, an immediate organisational perimeter in the Council of Conservative Citizens and extensive European support. It thought it was developing a "scientific" basis for racism and wanted every white person possible on board.

The last two conferences, in 2010 and 2011, however, were shut down after hotel venues backed out. If it has to join the ranks of those holding secretive events far from the public eye, its influence in the white nationalist universe is likely to wane. As Taylor's supply of stock speakers ages, and alternative right-wing newsletters and websites grow, his operation may pass into the same small hole in which the once-proud Liberty Lobby mogul Willis Carto now resides.

But as the Tea Parties have shown, there are still a lot of angry white people out there. Where they will ultimately end up is still unknown. ■

ANTI-FASCIST FILM CLUB

Fire in Babylon

Reviewed by **Ben Speroni**

STEVAN RILEY'S feature documentary *Fire in Babylon* celebrates the remarkable achievement of the West Indies cricket team in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Beginning with the era of so-called "Calypso Cricket" – the West Indies being seen as an entertaining team of plucky losers – the film documents captain Clive Lloyd's restructuring of the team, to create a bold squad of fast bowlers whose all-out pace of attack resulted in a stream of incredible victories.

This film is an excellent reminder of how exciting sport can be when played with incredible skill and passion. But *Fire in Babylon* is also about a cultural revolution.

The film begins in a period of mixed fortunes for West Indies cricket. Frank Worrell's captaincy in the early 1960s is remembered with pride: he was not only the first black captain of the West Indies, but also the overseer of an ambitious and successful side. But the seventies was a bleaker period. A loss against an aggressive, fast-bowling Australian side in 1976 became a turning point. Lloyd, and later the brilliant batsman Vivian Richards, were determined to rebuild the team into a winning machine, burying the "Calypso Cricket" label once and for all.

Riley emphasises the cultural significance of this achievement. Songs about the team are performed as interludes in diverse styles, starting with a Mentos band and moving through reggae, Dub and rap. Bunny Wailer (of The Wailers) is one of the most passionate interviewees in the film, and recalls Bob Marley's love of cricket (Marley even went into the changing room to encourage the team before matches). Interviewees discuss the positive black Caribbean identity that the West Indies cricketers represented as a parallel to the music of Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff: a new culture of pride and political force, a refusal to back down or be silent. Viv Richards's pan-African armband is a powerful reminder. "Green is for the land," he explains, "and yellow is the gold that was stolen. Red is the blood that was shed."

The politics of race and anti-racist struggle are always in the foreground. Apartheid in South Africa, the civil rights struggle in America and race riots in the UK correspond to a movement in the West Indies to form an individual identity, separate from the islands' colonial past.

Political and racial battles take place on and off the pitch. Disputes about wages see the players rebel by playing World Series matches in Australia. But when a group of rebels (including legendary bowler Colin Croft) tour South Africa, there is an outcry. The "honorary whites" status that the South African government gives to the rebel team, allowing them to play at segregated grounds, goes against the anti-racist message of West Indies cricket. Similarly, the white South Africa-born England captain Tony Greig's comments before a match with the West Indies – "We'll make them grovel" – can't escape its racial connotations; Riley brings the point home with images of contemporaneous National Front graffiti.

This is an exciting, entertaining and informative film, especially for anti-racists. Its portrayal of strength in the face of prejudice is both evocative and inspiring, a reminder that culture is always political.

Released 2011
Director Stevan Riley

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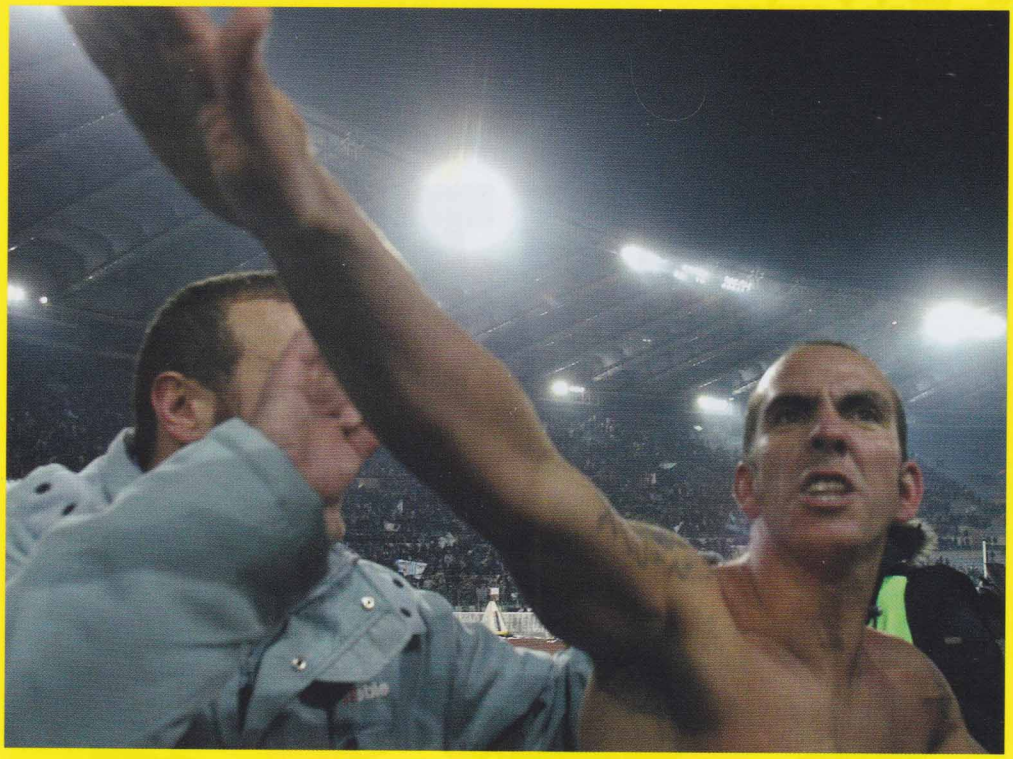
Fan outrage

By Andy Newman
GMB branch secretary, Wiltshire and Swindon, W15



SWINDON TOWN FC's recent decision to appoint the self-confessed fascist and Mussolini admirer Paolo Di Canio as manager has caused considerable controversy in the town. Internet forums connected to the club and to the local newspaper hosted heated debate with many longstanding fans, including season ticket holders, deeply upset by the news.

Perhaps predictably, for many fans who were only interested in football, Di Canio's politics were of no concern, and there was hostility to those questioning the appointment. Disturbingly this defence of Di Canio also included some people rationalising Mussolini as being somehow acceptable compared to Hitler. Gradually those opposed to the appointment gave up an unequal battle and stopped posting on the fan forums; but the disquiet remains.

Swindon Town FC is a well rooted, community-based club and has considerable social and cultural weight in the town. Openly associating the club with fascism is seen by many as reflecting poorly on our town, and there is nervousness about whether some fans may play up to it. Although Di Canio's politics were not known when he played in the English and Scottish leagues, his subsequent autobiography praised Mussolini as an ethical and misunderstood man whom Di Canio admired. When he returned to the Roman club Lazio, Di Canio made fascist salutes to their far-right hooligan "Ultras".

More generally, Di Canio's appointment in Swindon is a worrying sign of fascist politics being considered part of normal life. The club, and the local paper and BBC radio, were deluged by people expressing their concern, especially as Di Canio has made his political loyalties very public. He has openly stated "I am a fascist" and at least two black former colleagues have said they have a problem with him, Shaka Hislop from his West Ham days and Ousmane Dabo, a team mate from Lazio.

The local branch of the GMB trade union had an ongoing sponsorship deal for the reserve goalkeeper, Mark Scott, and used Swindon Town FC's conference and catering facilities; which in total amounts to about £4,000 over the past year. In light of the appointment of Di Canio GMB felt we had no alternative but to withdraw our financial support from the club, because we could not continue to associate our own values of anti-racism, anti-fascism and social inclusion with the club's brand while a fascist was at the helm.

At one level this was an easy decision: as anti-fascists we had no choice; but emotionally many of us have enduring loyalty to the club and don't like to be seen to criticise them. We have been congratulated by many fans who felt that the withdrawal of even our minor sponsorship did mean that appointing a fascist as manager was not simply business as normal. The decision of the board was held up to widespread public scrutiny and as a result there will be pressure on Di Canio to conform and stay clear of any association with fascism.

Disturbingly this defence of Di Canio also included some people rationalising Mussolini as being somehow acceptable compared to Hitler

As it happens, three Swindon Town FC players were killed during the Second World War fighting fascism, Alan Fowler, William Imrie and Dennis Olney. Imrie was also a Scotland international. Anti-fascist fans of Swindon Town will be seeking to commemorate their memory, as the true legacy of our club and our town. ■

We won't pay

By Nick Lowles

RESTAURATEURS IN BRICK LANE are joining forces with the HOPE not hate campaign to call on the authorities to ban an English Defence League march in Tower Hamlets.

The EDL are planning to march through the East London borough on Saturday 3 September. They claim to be protesting against an "Islamic state within a state" but their demonstration is clearly an attempt to wind up the local Muslim population, increase tensions and provoke disorder.

"The EDL will only bring trouble," says Gadu, owner of the Cafe Bangla and one of the co-ordinators of the campaign to have the march banned.

"If the EDL think they can just come here and attack people, they will find one of the best organised communities in Britain," he told *Searchlight*. "We don't want trouble with people who know nothing about us. Am I banning Christmas? Do I turn off the television when England or Manchester United are playing?

"There has been too much blood spilt here by racists. The history of [Brick] Lane is one of resistance to racism and poverty. It is a place for old friends and new friends. We are going to campaign that they are not allowed to come here and destroy it all by their lies, hatred and division."

The restaurateurs are also appalled at the cost of the policing operation that will be passed on to local taxpayers. "It has been suggested that this demo is going to cost over £1m to police," Gadu adds. "At a time when the police are facing huge cuts is this really what they should be spending our money on?

"I don't see why we should pay for the EDL's hate."

for their hate

Homophobia

There is already excited talk among the EDL leadership of this being a big demonstration; one in the heart of enemy territory. While the EDL have moved towards smaller protests they are earmarking Tower Hamlets as its next major national mobilisation.

They announced their intention to march in an uncompromising statement on the internet. "The English Defence League will be taking our message into the heart of militant Islam within our own country on September 3rd.

"The last two years of demonstrations could arguably have been dress rehearsals for this one.

"For too long now this cancerous infestation has been allowed to spread & it is now time to help stop the rot, we urge all who love this country to attend.

"The time has come to show the world that the Lion has now awoken, we will no longer be silenced or kettled in by the government or its police."

The EDL also claim they are demonstrating against the homophobia of the Muslim community. They cite the arrest of a Muslim man for putting up homophobic stickers in the borough and negative statements about gays and lesbians issued by people linked to the East London mosque.

It is because of the EDL's focus on homophobia that HOPE not hate is planning to link up with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups. Our campaign for a ban has already received the support of Out East, one of the two LGBT groups that operate in Tower Hamlets.

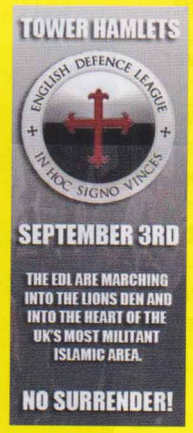
A LGBT HOPE not hate group is in the process of being established.

Why a ban?

A large EDL demonstration through the streets of Tower Hamlets has all the ingredients for major disorder. Their presence will understandably bring out counter-protestors, probably in their thousands, and it is likely that any EDL demonstration will be blocked or at least disrupted.

However, it is also important to look at the bigger picture. While it is essential for the community to stand together against hate, and of course we totally support actions to do this, disorder will help no one. People get hurt, people get arrested and an area gets stigmatised. As we have seen with Bradford and Oldham, a community suffers with the after effects of major disturbances for years.

There is no need for all this. The EDL's planned demonstration is a march of hate. They are coming into the area to wind up and provoke, and as is becoming increasingly clear their anti-extremist tag is just a cover for anti-Muslim racism. The authorities should simply ban any EDL march.


TOWER HAMLETS
ENGLISH DEFENCE LEAGUE
IN HOC SIGNO VINCES
SEPTEMBER 3RD
THE EDL ARE MARCHING INTO THE LIONS DEN AND INTO THE HEART OF THE UK'S MOST MILITANT ISLAMIC AREA.
NO SURRENDER!

Provocation: EDL advertises the march

Some might talk of freedom of expression, but what about the rights of a community to live without fear and violence? With rights come responsibilities and it is clearly not right for a small group of extremists to incite hatred in another community.

Over the next two months HOPE not hate will be organising a campaign to get the EDL march banned. If the EDL insist on a static protest we would urge the authorities to place it as far away from local people as possible. Without the threat of the EDL, local groups can then celebrate what is good about Tower Hamlets.

The campaign will include a petition, which will also be an opportunity to talk to local people, to engage with them about the threat of the EDL but also about what they have in common and what sort of society they live in. It is important that the campaign against the EDL is used to unite a community free of hatred and prejudice. That means uniting against racism and Islamophobia but also against homophobia and antisemitism. There is no place for hatred and violence in our communities and there is certainly no reason why those targeted should have to pay for the hatred of others. ■

Brick Lane symbolises the heart of Banglatown and has been the doorway to immigration into Britain for the past 150 years

We won't pay for their hate

SIGN THE PETITION AT

www.hopenothate.org.uk

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Abdul Subhan (Gadu to his friends) is a legendary squatter, restaurateur, raconteur and anti-fascist from Brick Lane. He owns Cafe Bangla, one of the oldest and most popular restaurants now on the Lane.

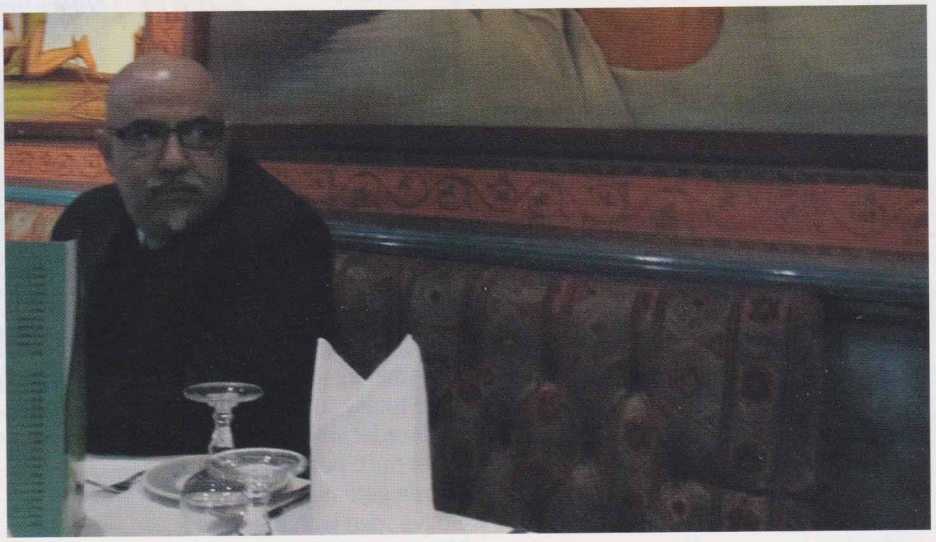
You've lived around Brick Lane for over 40 years. What's your story?
My father came to Britain after the war, I think in about 1948. He worked in Birmingham in the steel industry before going back to what was then East Pakistan. I moved to London in about 1968. I first started working in Brick Lane when it was dominated by the rag trade. Terrible times, I hated the work!

How were your early experiences shaped by racism?
Everyone around this part of the East London was from somewhere else. I remember the Jewish community, black people, the Irish. It was a real mix of accents and smells and noises, there was something quite frantic about the Lane too. I think it was about 1974 when things sort of exploded around us.

Exploded?
It was 1974. I was still very, very young. The National Front appeared on the Lane on an almost daily basis, shouting hatred, attacking people, trying to drive us out.

We had friends who came to help and there began a sort of defence of the community. But I didn't I suppose, really get properly involved until Altab Ali was murdered in 1978. He was a Bengali like me, murdered by racists coming home from work because they did not like the colour of his skin. From then on, things got very different.

Is it from here that the squatter movement began?
Around the same time. There were lots of large empty buildings left over from the days of the rag trade. Things were overcrowded and lots of people had nowhere to live. The NF was attacking homes where Bengalis lived and it was impossible to rent or get on the council waiting list. There were almost daily racist attacks and so we "opened up"



Abdul Subhan legendary squatter, restaurateur, raconteur and anti-fascist

some of the buildings. There was actually a really good community spirit about a really poor community organising and defending. I remember we had Indians from south London come to help and advise, some Irish builders, anarchists.

It's when we said "we're here to stay. You will not drive us away". That's when the first Bengali eateries opened.

And the National Front?
They and the BNP kept selling their papers at the top of the Lane. There were clashes all the time through the 1980s and 1990s. They'd make the occasional trip down the Lane on a Sunday when the market was on. I opened my first restaurant in September 1993. It was at the same time that Quddus Ali was almost kicked to death by racists and then the BNP got their first councillor in Millwall.

Brick Lane is world famous now, for all the right reasons too.
We are very proud of what we have achieved here. I pay my taxes, watch the England football team, and I go to the chippy on Commercial Road for fish and chips whenever I can. We are a very different people from those timid Bengalis the NF found here in the 1970s.

Why would a group like the EDL want to come here, then?
Trouble. If the EDL think they can just come here and attack people, they will find one of the best organised communities in Britain. We don't want trouble with people who know nothing about us. Am I banning Christmas? Do I turn off the television when England or Manchester United are playing?

There has been too much blood spilt here by racists. The history of this Lane is one of resistance to racism and poverty. It is a place for old friends and new friends. We are going to campaign that they are not allowed to come here and destroy it all by their lies, hatred and division. ■

Cafe Bangla (128 Brick Lane) is offering a 10% discount for HOPE not hate supporters

The magazine of the HOPE not hate campaign

Searchlight

Against fascism and racism

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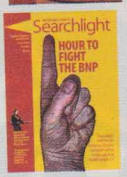

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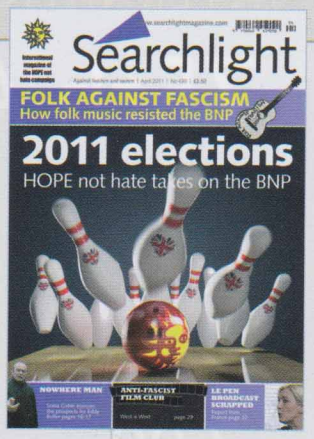

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ary, 1979

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about outdoor ar dates, locations, planned fascist ac potential attacks. that during the w worked as closely and for the Jewis wrote. She went politics when I w Junior League of from then on I w 6 different people working; writing; which might take come to fruition

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A 1948 copy o newspaper *On C* little more about women's intellige